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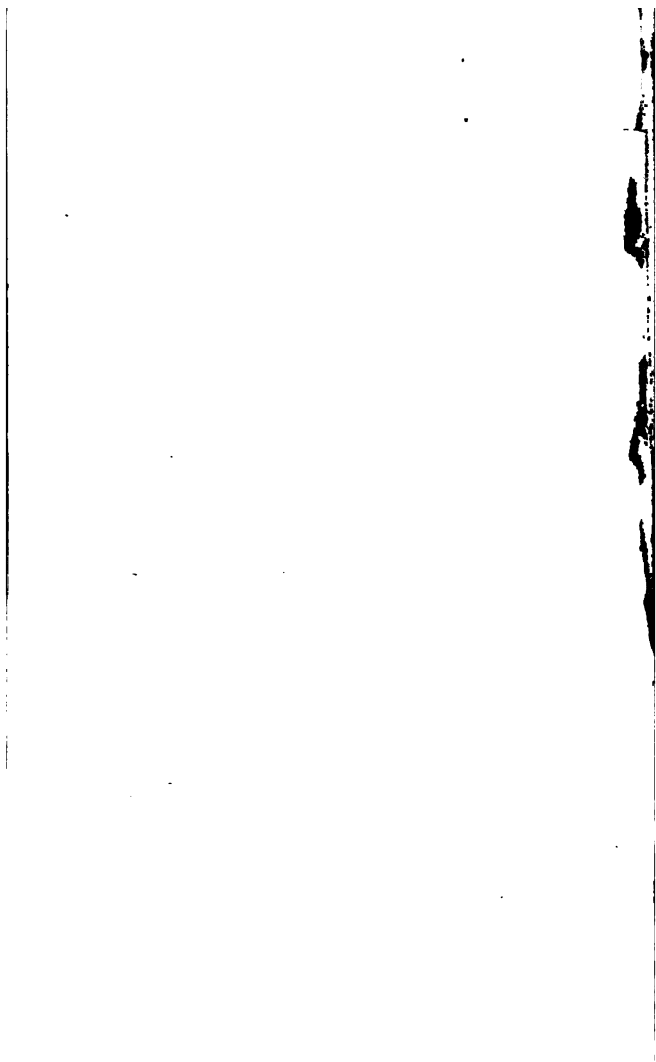
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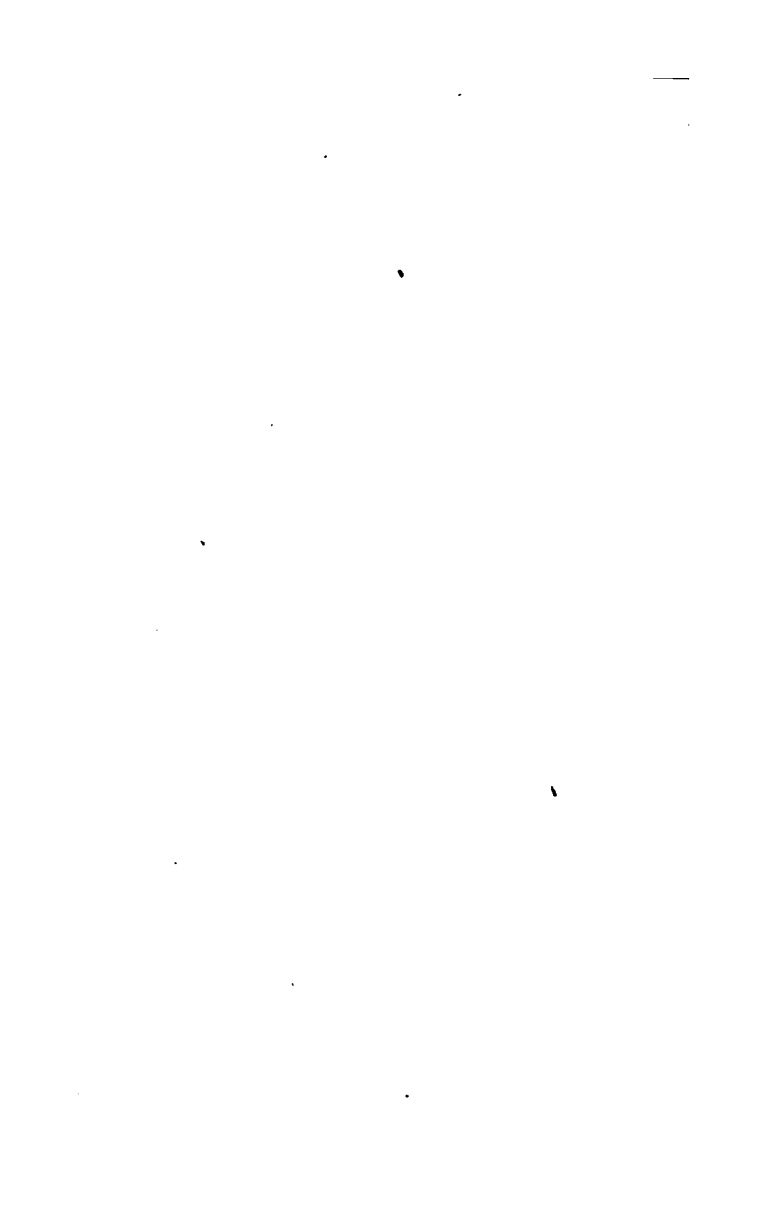
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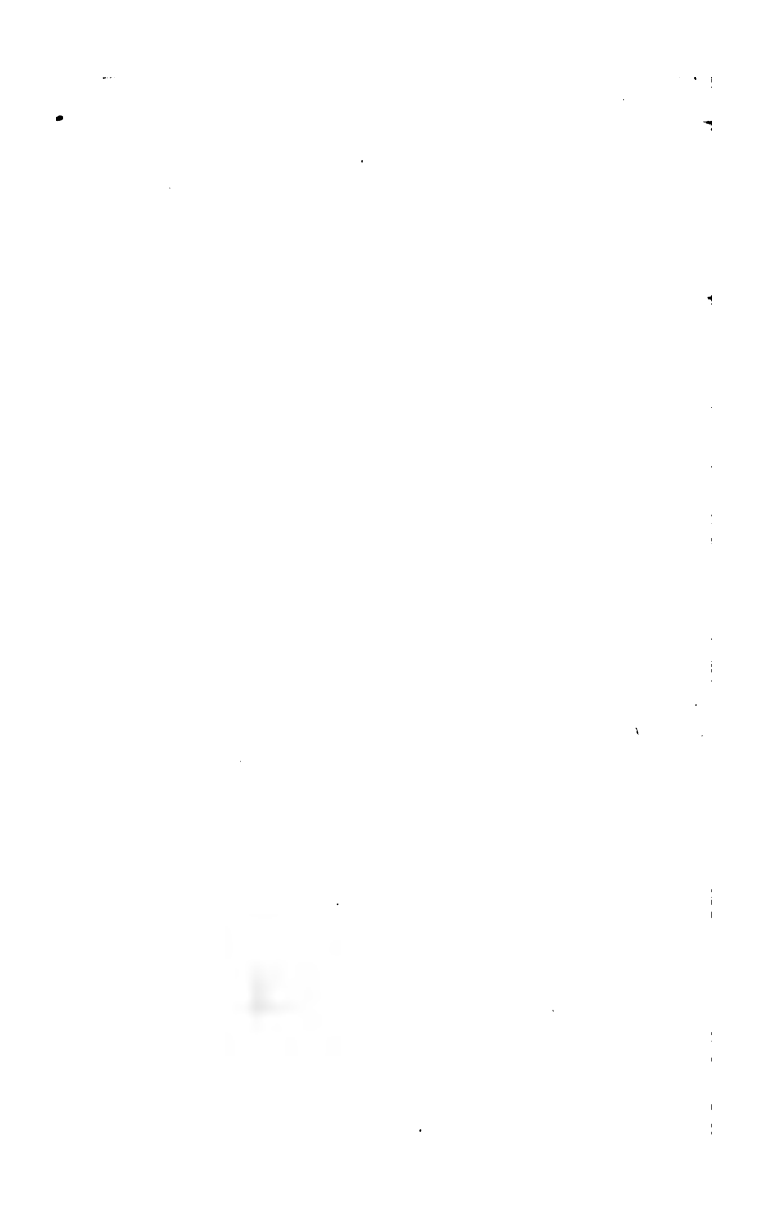
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BRIEF EXPOSITION
OF THE
ORIGIN, DESIGN, AND FULFILMENT
OF THE
JEWISH SABBATH;
AND REMARKS ON THE
CHRISTIAN SABBATH.



ABRIDGED FROM THE WRITINGS OF
DR. PETER HEYLIN, JOHN CALVIN, ARCHDEACON PALEY,
DR. WHATELY, WM. PENN, AND OTHERS.

"Worship was not made for time, but time for worship: nor is there
any day holy of itself, though holy things may be performed upon a day."
PENN.

LONDON;
WHITTAKER, TREACHER, AND ARNOT:
AND
THOMAS HODGSON, LIVERPOOL.
1832.

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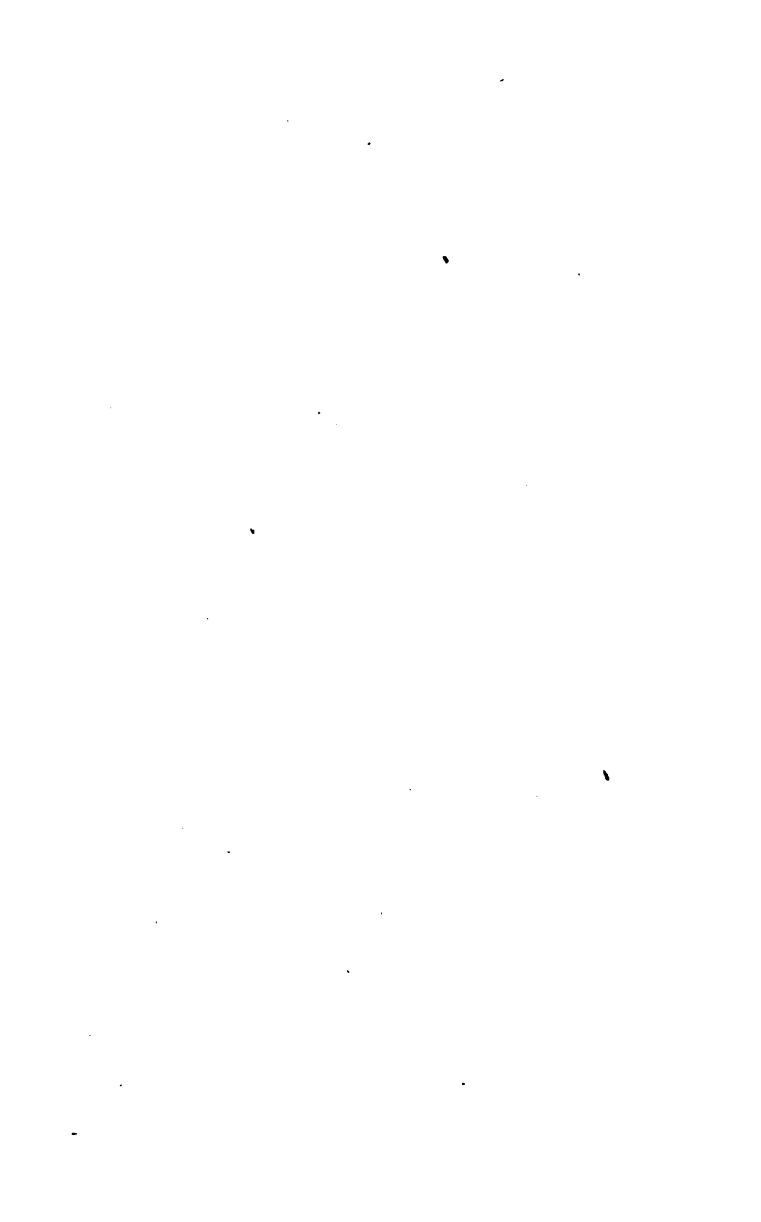
LIVERPOOL:
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PREFACE.

THE imposition upon the public mind of the idea that any particular day is more holy than another, tacitly gives a release from that circumspection of conduct which is alike required on every day; and however advantageous the consequences may appear, yet, the variety of sentiment and the superstitious views which exist on the subject upon which the following extracts treat, show the importance of guarding against an erroneous opinion, whether it be on the side of undue liberty, or pharisaical rigour. Whilst some persons are very strict in enforcing the observance of the first day of the week as *the Christian Sabbath*, and consider it to be so by *divine* appointment, because that God rested on the seventh day after having finished the work of creation; and that we are bound by the fourth commandment of the Jewish decalogue to keep

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place. New and higher motives were implanted;—a more exalted, and perfect example was proposed for imitation;—a loftier standard of morality was established;—rewards more glorious, and punishments more appalling, were held out;—and supernatural aid was bestowed;—and the Christian, with these incentives and these advantages, is left to apply for himself, in each case, the principles of the gospel; he is left to act at his own discretion, according to the dictates of his conscience;—to cultivate Christian dispositions;—and thus to be ‘a law unto himself.’ ”¹

¹ Dr. Whately's *Essays on some of the difficulties in the Writings of St. Paul.* 2d Ed. p. 253, 254.

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EXTRACTS
FROM DR. PETER HEYLIN'S
HISTORY OF THE SABBATH.

Published 1631.

"IN the beginning (saith the text) God created the heaven and the earth."¹—Which being "finished, and all the host of them" made perfect, "on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made." And then it followeth, "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work, which God created and made."² Unto this passage of the text, and this point of time, some have referred the *institution* and *original* of the Sabbath; taking these words to be a plain narration of a thing then done, according to that very time wherein the Scripture doth report it: and that the sanctifying of the seventh day therein mentioned, was a commandment given by God to our father Adam. Others, and those more ancient, and of more authority, conceive these words to have been

¹ Gen. i. 1.

² Gen. ii. 1, 2, 3.

spoken by a *prolepsis*, or *anticipation*; and to relate unto the times wherein Moses wrote; and that it was an intimation only of the reason why God imposed upon the *Jews*, the sanctifying rather of the *seventh day*, than of any other; no precept to that purpose being given to *Adam* and to his posterity.

The reason which moved Moses to make this mention of the *Sabbath*, even in the first beginning of the book of God, and so long time before the *institution* of the same, doubtless was, the better to excite the Jews to observe that day, from which they seemed at first to be much averse: and therefore were not only to be minded of it by a *memento* in the front of the commandment; but by an intimation of the equity and reason of it, even in the entrance of God's book, derived from God's first resting on that day after all his works.

That God imposed no other law on Adam than that of the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge, the Fathers generally have agreed on.—If that the *law of abstinence* had been alone sufficient for the justification of our father Adam, as Tertullian thinks; or if it were the first law given by God unto him—as both St. Basil and St. Ambrose are of opinion—then was there no such law at all then made, as that of *sanctifying of the Sabbath*; or else not made according to that time and order wherein this passage of the Scripture is laid down by Moses: and if not *then*, there is no *other* ground for this command-

ment in the book of God, before the wandering of God's people in the wilderness, and the fall of manna.

It is true, that all men generally have agreed on this,—that it is consonant to the law of nature to set apart some time to God's public service: but that this time should rather be the *seventh* day, than any other, that they impute not unto any thing in nature; but either to divine, legal, or ecclesiastical institution. And for the ancients, our venerable Bede assures us, that to the fathers before the law, all days were equal; the *seventh day* having no prerogative before the others: and this he calls, the *liberty of the natural Sabbath*; which ought (saith he) to be restored at our Saviour's coming.—If so,—if that the Sabbath, or time of rest unto the Lord, was naturally left free and arbitrary,—then certainly it was not restrained more unto one day than another; or to the *seventh* day more than to the *sixth* or *eighth*.

Sabbaths and all days are alike in respect of providence; in reference to the universal government of the world and nature. No Sabbath, whereon God doth rest from the administration of the world by him created; whereon he doth not make his sun to shine both on good and bad; whereon he rains not plenty upon the sinner and the just,—as *Origen* hath truly noted.—Nor is this more than what our Saviour said in his holy gospel,—“My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.”¹

¹ John v. 17.

That there was no Sabbath kept amongst us men till the time of Moses, the Christian fathers generally, and some Rabbins also, have agreed together. "None of the righteous men," saith Justin Martyr, "and such as walked before the Lord, were either circumcised or kept the Sabbath, until the several times of Abraham and Moses." So Irenæus, having first told us that circumcision and the Sabbath were both given for signs; and having spoken particularly of Abraham, Noah, Lot, and Enoch, that they were justified without them, adds, for the close of all, that all the multitude of the faithful before Abraham, were justified without the one; and all the Patriarchs which preceded Moses without the other.

Tertullian, next, disputeth thus against the Jews:—that they which think the Sabbath must be still observed as necessary to salvation, or circumcision to be used upon pain of death, ought first of all, saith he, to prove "that the Fathers of the former times were circumcised or kept the Sabbath, or that thereby they did obtain to be accounted the friends of God."

Then comes Eusebius the historian, and he makes it good, that the religion of the Patriarchs before Moses' law, was nothing different from the Christian. And how proves he that?—"They were not circumcised, no more are we; they kept not any Sabbath, no more do we; they were not bound to absti-

nence from sundry kinds of meats, which are prohibited by Moses, nor are we neither."

It is true the Scriptures tell us that Abel offered sacrifice: but yet they do not tell us, that in his sacrifices, he had more regard unto the seventh day than to any other. To offer sacrifice he might learn of Adam, or of natural reason, which doth sufficiently instruct us, that we ought all to make some public testimony of our subjection to the Lord. But neither Adam did observe the Sabbath, nor could nature teach it. And however some modern writers have conjectured—and conjectured only—that Abel in his sacrifices might have respect unto the Sabbath, yet those whom we may better trust, have affirmed the contrary.

Enoch, as the text tells us, *walked with God*,—and therefore doubt we not, he would carefully have kept the Sabbath had it been required. But of him also, the Fathers generally say the same as they did of others. "Enoch," saith Tertullian, "that righteous man, being neither circumcised nor a Sabbath-keeper, was by the Lord translated, and saw not death; to be an *item* or instruction unto us, that we, without the burden of the law of Moses, shall be found acceptable unto God."

It is a conclusion in Geography, that if two men do take a journey from the self-same place, round the earth,—the one eastward, the other westward,—and meet in the same place

again, it will appear that he which hath gone east, hath gotten, and that the other going westward hath lost a day in their account. Suppose that a Turk, a Jew, and a Christian, should dwell together at Jerusalem,—whereof the one doth keep his Sabbath on the Friday, the other on the Saturday, and the third sanctifieth the Sunday—then, that upon the Saturday the Turk begin his journey westward, and the Christian eastward, so as both of them compassing the world do meet again in the same place, the Jew continuing where they left him,—it will fall out, that the Turk by going westward, having lost a day, and the Christian going eastward, having got a day, one and the same day will be a *Friday* to the *Turk*, a *Saturday* unto the *Jew*, and a *Sunday* to the *Christian*. And now what should these people do when they were returned? If they are bound by nature and the moral law, to sanctify precisely one day in seven, they must then sanctify a day apart from their other countrymen, and, like a crew of *Schismatics*, divide themselves from the whole body of the church; or to keep order, and comply with other men, must of necessity be forced to go against the law of nature, or the moral law, which ought not to be violated for any by-respect whatever.

The Scripture is exceeding copious in setting down the life and actions of Abraham, as also of the lives and actions of his son and nephews; their flittings and removes, their sacrifices, forms of prayer, and whatsoever

else was signal in the whole course of their affairs ; but yet no mention of the Sabbath. Though such a memorable thing as sanctifying of a constant day unto the Lord, might probably have been omitted in the former Patriarchs, of whom there is but little left, save their names and ages, (as if they had been only brought into the story to make way for him,) yet it is strange that in a punctual and particular relation of his life and piety, there should not be one *item* to point out the Sabbath, had it been observed.—This is enough to make one think there was no such matter. *Et quod non invenis usquam, esse putes nusquam*—in the poet's language—(And what thou dost not *find* any where, thou mayest conclude *to be* no where.)

I grant, indeed, that Abraham kept THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH in righteousness and holiness, serving the Lord his God all the days of his life ; and so did Isaac and Jacob.

Our venerable Bede, also, hath affirmed as much, that Abraham kept indeed the spiritual Sabbath, whereby he always rested from the servile works of sin ; but that he kept or sanctified any other Sabbath, the Christian fathers deny unanimously.

“What” (saith Eusebius) “shall we say of “Job?—that just, that pious, that most blameless man.—What was the rule whereby he “squared his life, and governed his devotions? Was any part of Moses’ law? Not “so. Was any keeping of the Sabbath, or “observation of any other Jewish order?

“How could that be,” saith he, “considering that he was ancienter than Moses, and lived before his law was published? For Moses was the seventh from Abraham, and Job the fifth.”

We may conclude with safety, that hitherto no Sabbath had been kept in all the world from the creation to this very time, which was above 2500 years; no, nor commanded to be kept amongst them in their generations; for had it been commanded, sure it had been kept. It was not all the pride of Pharaoh, or subtle tyranny of his subjects, that could have made them violate that sacred day, had it been commanded to them from the Lord. The miseries which they after suffered under Antiochus, rather than that they would profane the Sabbath, and those calamities which they chose to fall upon them by the hands of the Romans, rather than make resistance upon that day, when lawfully they might have done it, are proofs sufficient, that neither force nor fear could now have wrought upon them not to keep the same, had such a duty been commanded. And certainly either the Sabbath was not reckoned all this while, as any part or branch of the law of nature, or else it finds hard measure in the book of God, that there should be particular proofs how punctually the rest of the moral law was observed and practised amongst the Patriarchs, and not one word or *item* that concerns the observation of the Sabbath.

Now that the whole law was written in the

hearts of the fathers, and that they had some knowledge of all the *other* commandments, and did live accordingly, the Scripture doth sufficiently declare unto us. First—"I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect." So said God to Abraham:¹—Then Jacob's going up from Bethel, to cleanse his house from idolatry, is proof enough that they were acquainted with the second:—the pious care they had, not to take the name of the Lord their God in vain, appears at full in the religious making of their oaths, Abraham with Abimelech, and Jacob with Laban:—next for the fifth commandment, what duties children owe their parents, the practice of Isaac and Jacob doth declare abundantly, in being ruled by them in the choice of their wives, and readily obeying all their directions:—so for the sin of murder, the history of Jacob's children, and the grieved father's curse upon them for the slaughter of the Shechemites, together with God's precept given to Noah against shedding blood, show us that it was both forbidden, and condemned being done:—the continency of Joseph, and the punishment threatened to Abimelech for keeping Sarah, Abraham's wife; the quarrelling of Laban for his stolen idols, and Joseph's pursuit after his brethren for the silver cup that was supposed to be purloined, are proofs sufficient, that adultery and theft were deemed unlawful:—and last of all, Abimelech's re-

¹ Gen. xvii. 1.

prehension of Abraham and Isaac, for bearing false witness in the denial of their wives, shows plainly that they had the knowledge of that law also:—The like may also be affirmed of their not coveting the wives and goods, or any thing that was their neighbours. For though the history cannot tell us of men's secret thoughts, yet we may judge of good men's thoughts by their outward actions. Had Joseph coveted his master's wife, he might have enjoyed her. And Job, more home unto the point, affirms expressly of himself, that his heart was never secretly enticed; which is the same with this—that he did not covet.

We conclude, then, that seeing there is particular mention how all the residue of the commandments had been observed and practised by the saints of old, and that no word at all is found which concerns the sanctifying of the Sabbath, that certainly there was no Sabbath sanctified in all that time, from the creation to the law of Moses; nor reckoned any part of the law of nature, or an especial ordinance of God.

On the fifteenth day of the second month after the departure of the Israelites out of Egypt, being that day seventh night before the *first Sabbath* was discovered in the fall of manna, we find not any thing that implies either rest or worship. We read, indeed, how all the congregation murmured—as they did before against Moses and Aaron—wishing that they had died in the land of Egypt,

where they had bread their bellies full, rather than be destroyed with famine. So eagerly they murmured, that to content them, God sent them quails that night, and rained down bread from heaven next morning. Was this, think you, the sanctifying of a Sabbath to the Lord their God? Indeed, the next seventh day that followed, was by the Lord commanded to them for a *Sabbath*; and ratified by a great and signal miracle the day before; wherein it pleased him to give them double what they used to gather on the former days, that they might rest upon the seventh with the greater comfort. This was a preamble or preparative to the following *Sabbath*: for by this miracle—this rest of God from raining manna on the seventh day—the people came to know which was precisely the seventh day from the world's creation; whereof they were quite ignorant at that present time.

When the children of Israel on the sixth day had gathered twice as much manna as they used to do, according as the Lord had directed by his servant Moses; they understood not what they did, at least why they did it.¹ "The rulers of the congregation," as the text informs us, "came and told Moses of it;" and he, as God before had taught him, acquainted them, "that on the morrow should be the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord;" and that they were to keep the overplus until the morning. Nay,

¹ Exod. xvi. 5 to 27.

so far were the people from knowing any thing of the *Sabbath*, or of God's rest upon that day, that though the prophet had thus preached unto them of a Sabbath's rest, the people gave small credit unto him. For it is said "that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather,"¹ (which was the seventh day after, or the second Sabbath as some think,) notwithstanding all that had been spoken; and that the manna stank not as on other days. So that this resting of the people was the first sanctifying of the Sabbath mentioned in the Scriptures; and God's great care to make provision for his people on the day before, the blessing he bestowed upon it.

Zanchius, thus: "As neither the judicial nor the ceremonial, so nor the moral law contained in the *decalogue*, doth any way concern us Christians, as given by Moses to the Jews: but only so far forth, as it is consonant to the law of nature, which binds all alike; and after was confirmed and ratified by Christ, our King. Because, if the *decalogue*, as given by Moses to the Jews, did concern the Gentiles, the *Gentiles* had been bound by the fourth commandment, to observe the Sabbath in as strict a manner as the *Jews*. Since therefore it is manifest, that the Gentiles never were obliged to observe the Sabbath, it followeth that they neither were, nor possibly could be bound to any of the residue, as given by Moses to the Jews." We may conclude

¹ Exod. xvi. 27.

from hence, that had the fourth commandment been merely moral, it had no less concerned the Gentiles than it did the Israelites.

“Tell me,” saith Tertullian, “What is there in the *decalogue*, except the observation of the *Sabbath-day*, which is not carefully to be observed by a Christian man?”

Eusebius tells us, that Moses was the first lawgiver amongst the Jews, who did appoint them to observe a certain Sabbath in memory of God’s rest from the world’s creation. Athanasius lets us know that in the book of Exodus, we have the institution of the pass-over, &c. what time the Sabbath took beginning, and the law was published by Moses on Mount Sinai. Macarius doth affirm as much: viz. that in the law that was given by Moses, it was commanded as in a figure or a shadow, that every man should rest on the Sabbath-day from the works of labour. St. Hierom, also, lets us know that the observation of the Sabbath, amongst other ordinances, was given by God unto his people in the wilderness. Then Epiphanius: “God,” saith he, “rested on “the seventh day from all his labours, which “day he blessed and sanctified, and by his “angel made known the same to his servant “Moses.”

Where the Jews used, on other days, to wear their Phylacteries on their arms or foreheads, to be a sign or token to them, as the Lord commanded, they laid them by upon the Sabbaths; because, say they, the Sabbath was itself a sign.

On what motives God was pleased to prescribe a sabbath to the Jews, more at this time than any of the former ages, the Fathers severally have told us; yea, and the Scriptures too, in several places. Justin Martyr, as before we noted, gives this general reason; "because of their hard-heartedness, and irregular courses;" wherein St. Austin closeth with him. Particularly Gregory Nyssen, makes the special motive to be this;—"to restrain the people from the love of money. For coming out of Egypt very poor and bare, and having almost nothing but what they borrowed of the Egyptians, they gave themselves, saith he, unto continual and incessant labour, the sooner to obtain riches. Therefore said God that they should labour six days and rest the seventh." Damascen somewhat to this purpose:—"God," saith he, "seeing the carnal and the covetous disposition of the Israelites, appointed them to keep a Sabbath, that so their servants and their cattle might partake of rest." These seem to ground themselves on the 5th of Deuteronomy, where God commands his people to observe his Sabbaths, "that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou." And then it followeth, "Remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath-day."¹ The force

¹ Deut. v. 14, 15.

of which illation is no more than this;—that as God brought them out of Egypt, wherein they were servants, so he commands them to take pity on their servants, and let them rest upon the Sabbath, considering that they themselves would willingly have had some time of rest, had they been permitted. A second motive might be this;—to make them always mindful of that spiritual rest, which they were to keep from the acts of sin; and that eternal rest that they did expect from all toil and misery. In reference unto this eternal rest, St. Augustine tells us, that the Sabbath was commanded to the Jews, “*as a shadow of things to come,*” (in St. Paul’s language) which God doth promise unto those that do the works of righteousness. And in relation to the other, the Lord himself hath told us that he had given his Sabbath unto the Jews, *to be a sign between him and them, that they might know that he was the Lord that sanctified them*;—(Exodus xxxi. 13.) which is again repeated by Ezekiel (xx. 12), “*That they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.*”

The Gentiles were so far from sanctifying the Sabbath or seventh day themselves, that they derided those that kept it. The *circumcision* of the Jews was not more ridiculous amongst the heathens than their *Sabbaths* were; nor were they more extremely scoffed at for the one than for the other, by all sorts of writers. Seneca lays it to their charge, that by occasion of their Sabbaths, they spent

the seventh part of their lives in sloth and idleness; and Tacitus, that not the seventh day, but the seventh year also was as unprofitably wasted. And Ovid makes them a peculiar mark of the Jewish religion. The prophet Jeremiah, in his lamentations, (i. 7,) made on the death of king Josiah, saith, "The adversaries saw her, and did mock at her *Sabbaths*." The Jews must needs be singular in this observation; all nations else, both Grecian and Barbarian, had never so agreed together to deride them for it.

What should move the Jews to prefer circumcision before the Sabbath, unless it were because that circumcision were the older ceremony, I would gladly learn; especially considering the resemblance that was between them in all manner of circumstances. Was circumcision made to be a token of the covenant between the Lord of heaven and the seed of Abraham?¹ So was the Sabbath between God and the house of Israel.² Was circumcision a perpetual covenant with the seed of Abraham in their generations?³ So was the Sabbath to be kept throughout their generations for a perpetual covenant also.⁴ Was circumcision so exacted, that whosoever was not circumcised, that soul should be cut off from the people of God?⁵ So God hath said it of his Sabbath, that whosoever breaks it, or doth any manner of work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among the people.⁶

¹ Gen. xvii. 11.² Exod. xxxi. 17.³ Gen. xvii. 7.⁴ Exod. xxxi. 16.⁵ Gen. xvii. 14.⁶ Exod. xxxi. 14.

In all these points there was a just and plain equality between them; but had the Sabbath been a part of the moral law, it must have infinitely gone before circumcision.

When the Jews were grown so strict, that it was thought unlawful either to give or take an alms on *the Sabbath-day*, Augustus, for his part, was willing not to break them of it; yet so to order and dispose his bounties, that they might be no losers by so fond a strictness. For whereas he did use to distribute monthly, a certain donative, either in money or in corn, this distribution sometimes happened on the *Sabbath-days*, whereon the Jews might neither give nor take. Therefore, it was provided that their proportion should be given them on the next day after, that so they might be made partakers of the public benefit. Their superstition sure was now very vehement; seeing it would not suffer men to do the works of mercy on the day of mercy. And therefore it was more than time they should be sent to school again, to learn this lesson—"I will have mercy and not sacrifice."¹

And so indeed they were sent unto school to Him, who himself was both the Teacher and the Truth. For at this time our Saviour came into the world. And had there been no other business for him to do, this only might have seemed to require his presence: viz. to rectify those dangerous errors, which had been spread abroad in these latter times, about the Sabbath. The service of the Sab-

¹ Matt. ix. 13.

bath in the congregation, he found full enough. The custom was, to read a section of the law out of the Pentateuch, and after to illustrate, or confirm the same out of some parallel place amongst the prophets. That ended, if occasion were, and that the rulers of the synagogue did consent unto it, there was a word of exhortation made unto the people, conducing to obedience and the works of piety. So far, it is apparent by that passage in the Acts of the Apostles, touching Paul and Barnabas; that being at Antioch in Pisidia, on the Sabbath-day, "after the reading of the law and the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on."¹ So far, our Saviour found no fault; but rather countenanced and confirmed the custom, by his gracious presence and example.

But in those rigid vanities and absurd traditions, by which the Scribes and Pharisees had abused the Sabbath, and made it of an ease, to become a drudgery; in those he thought it requisite to detect their follies, and ease the people of that bondage, which they in their proud humours had imposed upon them. The Pharisees had taught that it was unlawful on the Sabbath-day either to heal the impotent, or relieve the sick, or feed the hungry; but he confutes them in them all, both by his acts and by his disputations. Whatever he maintained by argument, he

¹ Acts xiii. 15.

made good by practice. Did they accuse his followers of gathering corn upon the Sabbath, being then an hungred? He lets them know what David did in the same extremity. Their eating, or their gathering on the Sabbath-day, take you which you will, was not more blameable, nay not so blameable by the law, as David's eating of the shew-bread, which plainly was not to be eaten by any but the priest alone. His bidding of the impotent man to take up his bed and get him gone, which seemed so odious in their eyes, was it so great a toil as to walk round the walls of Jericho, and bear the ark upon their shoulders?—or any greater burden to their idle backs, than to lift up the ox, and set him free out of that dangerous ditch, into the which the hasty beast might fall as well upon the *Sabbath* as the other days? Should men take care of oxen, and not God of man? Not so. The Sabbath was not made for a lazy idol, which all the nations of the world should fall down and worship; but for the ease and comfort of the labouring man, that he might have some time to refresh his spirits. "The Sabbath," saith our Saviour, "was made for man;" man was not made to serve the Sabbath. Nor had God so irrevocably spoke the word touching the *sanctifying of the Sabbath*, that he had left himself no power to repeal that law: "The Son of Man," even he that was the son both of God and man, "being Lord also of the Sabbath."¹

¹ Mark ii. 27.

Nay, it is rightly marked by some, that Christ our Saviour did more works of charity on the Sabbath-day, than on all days else. Not that there was some urgent and extreme necessity, either the cures to be performed that day, or the man to perish; for if we look into the story of our Saviour's actions, we find no such matter. It is true, that the centurion's son, and Peter's mother-in-law were even sick to death; and there might be some reason in it, why he should haste unto their cures on the Sabbath-day. But on the other side, the man that had the withered hand,¹—and the woman with her flux of blood eighteen years together,²—he that was troubled with the dropsy,³—and the poor wretch which was afflicted with the palsy,⁴—in none of these was found any such necessity, but that the cure might have been respite to another day. What then? Shall it be thought our Saviour came to *destroy* the law? No. God forbid! Himself hath told us, that he came to *fulfil* it, rather. He came to let them understand the right meaning of it; that for the residue of time wherein it was to be in force, they might no longer be misled by the Scribes and Pharisees, and such blind guides as did abuse them.

Not then to take away the law; it was to last a little longer. He had not yet pronounced *consummatum est*—that the law was abrogated. Nor might it seem so proper for him to take away one Sabbath from us, which

¹ Matt. xiii.² Luke xiii.³ Luke xiv.⁴ John v.

was rest from *labour*, until he had provided us with another, which was rest from *sin*. And to provide us such a Sabbath, was to cost him dearer than words and arguments. He healed us by his word before:—Now he must heal us by his stripes, or else no entrance into his *rest*—the *eternal Sabbath*.

That the Sabbath was to end with other legal ceremonies, is by this apparent; first, that it was an institute of *Moses*; and secondly, an institute peculiar to the Jewish nation; and therefore was to end with the law of *Moses*, and the state of Jewry. Fathers, there be good store, which affirm as much. And first for Justin Martyr: it is his chief scope and purpose in his conference with Trypho, to make it manifest and unquestionable, that as there was no use of circumcision before Abraham's time, nor of the Sabbath until Moses, so neither is there any use of them at this present time; that as it took beginning then, so it was now to have an end. Tertullian, in his argument against the Marcionites, draws out this conclusion: that God ordained the Sabbath upon special reasons, and as the times did then require; not that it should continue always. But he that speaks most fully to this point, is the great *St. Austin*. First, that the Sabbath is quite abrogated—the keeping of the Sabbath is *taken utterly away* in this time of grace. Secondly, that the Sabbath was not kept in the Church of Christ. “What is there” (saith the father) “in all the *Deca-*

"*logue*, except the keeping of the Sabbath, "which is not punctually to be observed of "every Christian?" And thirdly, that it is not lawful for a Christian to observe the Sabbath. For, speaking of the law, how it was a pedagogue to bring us unto the knowledge of Christ, he adds, that "in those "institutes and ordinances which are not "lawful to be used by any Christian, such "as the Sabbath, circumcision, sacrifices, and "other such things, many great mysteries are "contained." And in another place, "He "that doth literally keep the Sabbath, savours "of the flesh; but to savour of the flesh is "death. Therefore, no *Sabbath* to be kept "by the sons of life."

No Sabbath to be kept at all? We affirm not so. We know there is a CHRISTIAN SABBATH, a Sabbath figured out to us in the fourth commandment, which every Christian man must keep, that doth desire to enter into the rest of God. This is that Sabbath which the prophet *Isaiah* hath commended to us: "Blessed is the man that keepeth "the Sabbath from polluting it."¹ What Sabbath is it, saith St. Hierom, that is here commanded? The following words, saith he, will inform us that,—"keeping our hands "from doing evil." The like spiritual Sabbath, doth the man of God prescribe unto us in the 58th chap. of his book. "If thou turn "away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing "thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the

¹ *Isaiah lvi. 2.*

“Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord,
 “honourable; and shalt honour him, not
 “doing thine own ways, nor finding thine
 “own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words;
 “then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord,
 “and I will cause thee to ride upon the high
 “places of the earth,”¹ &c.

What saith Hierom to this? It must be understood, saith he, spiritually. For otherwise, if those things above remembered are prohibited only on the *Sabbaths*, then were it lawful for us on the other days to follow our own sinful courses, speak our own idle words, and pursue our own voluptuous pleasures; which were most foolish to imagine. And so saith Ryvet, too, for the modern writers: “That everlasting rest from all sinful works which is begun in this life, and finished in the life to come, is signified and represented by those words of Isaiah.”¹ They therefore much mistake these texts, and the meaning of them, who, grounding thereupon, forbid all manner of recreations and lawful pleasures on their *supposed Sabbath day*, as being utterly prohibited by God’s holy prophet. The *Jews* did thus abuse this Scripture, in the times before; and made it an unlawful matter for any man to walk into the fields, or to see his gardens, on the Sabbath-day; either to mark what things they wanted, or how well they prospered; because this was to do his own pleasure, and so forbidden by the prophet. But those that un-

¹ Isaiah lviii. 13, 14.

² Chap. lviii. 13, 14.

derstand THE TRUE CHRISTIAN SABBATH, apply them to a better purpose, as was showed before. And for the Christian Sabbath—what it is, and in what things it doth consist, besides what hath been already said, we shall add something more from the ancient fathers: “If any man,” saith Justin Martyr, “that hath been formerly a perjured person, “a deceiver of his neighbour, an incontinent “liver, repents him of his sins, and amends “his life, that man doth keep a true and holy “Sabbath to the Lord his God.” See to this purpose also, Clement of Alexandria: “That man whose ‘life is hid with Christ in God,’ keeps a daily Sabbath.” Macarius also tells us, “that the Sabbath given from God by “Moses, was a type only, and a shadow of “that real Sabbath given by the Lord unto “the soul.” More fully Chrysostom: “What use,” saith he, “is there of a Sabbath to him “whose conscience is a continual feast—to “him whose conversation is in heaven? For “now we feast it every day, doing no manner “of wickedness, but keeping a spiritual rest, “holding our hands from covetousness, our “bodies from uncleanness. What need we “more?” St. Augustine, finally, makes the fourth commandment, so far as it concerns us Christians, to be no more than the quiet of the heart, and the peace of mind occasioned by a good conscience.

Of any other Sabbath to be looked for now, the fathers utterly are silent; and therefore we may well resolve there is no such

thing. Where it was objected in St. Austin's time, why Christians did not keep the Sabbath, since Christ affirms it of himself, that *he came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it*; the *father* thereto makes reply—that therefore they observed it not—"because our Saviour had fulfilled whatever was intended in that law, by calling us to a spiritual rest in his own great mercy." For as it is most truly said by Epiphanius: "He was the great and everlasting Sabbath, whereof the less (and temporal) Sabbath was a type and figure which had continued till his coming: by him commanded in the law, and by him fulfilled in the gospel."

Neither did he or his disciples ordain another Sabbath in the place of this, as if they had intended only to shift the day, and to transfer this honour to some other time—their doctrine and their practice are directly contrary to so new a fancy. It is true that in some tract of time, the church, in honour of his resurrection, did set apart that day on which he rose, to holy exercises: but this upon their own authority, and without warrant from above, that we can hear of, more than the general warrant which God gave his church—that *all things in it be done decently and in order*.¹

I say in tract of time, for it was not so in the beginning. The very day itself was not so observed, though it was known to the Apostles in the morning early, that the Lord

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

was risen. We find not on the news, that they came together for the performance of divine and religious exercises, much less that they intended it for a Sabbath-day; or that our Saviour came amongst them until late at night, as in likelihood he would have done, had any such performance been thought necessary as was required unto the making of a Sabbath. Nay—which is more—our blessed Saviour on that day and two of the disciples, whatsoever the others did, were otherwise employed than in Sabbath duties. For from Jerusalem to Emmaus, whither the two disciples went, was sixty furlongs, and so much back again unto Jerusalem, which is fifteen miles. And Christ—who went the journey with them, at least part thereof, and left them not until they came unto Emmaus—was back again that night, and put himself into the midst of the apostles. Had he intended it for a Sabbath-day, doubtless he would have rather joined himself with the apostles, who (as it is most likely) kept themselves together in expectation of the issue, and so were most prepared and fitted to begin the new *Christian Sabbath*; than with those men who—contrary to the nature of a Sabbath's rest—were now engaged in a journey, and that for aught we know, about worldly business. Nor may we think but that our Saviour would have told them of so great a fault as violating the new Christian Sabbath, even in the first beginning of it, had any Sabbath been intended. As for the being of

the eleven in a place together, that could not have relation to any *Sabbath* duties, or religious exercises, being none such were yet commanded; but only to those cares and fears, wherewith, poor men, they were distracted, which made them loth to part asunder, till they were settled in their hopes, or otherwise resolved on somewhat whereunto to trust.

And where it is conceived by some, that our most blessed Saviour showed himself oftener unto the apostles upon the first day of the week than on any other, and therefore by his own appearings did sanctify ~~that~~ day instead of the Jewish *Sabbath*; neither the premises are true, nor the sequel necessary. The premises not true—for it is nowhere to be found that he appeared oftener on the first day than any other of the week; it being said in Holy Scripture, that “he was seen of them by the space of forty days”¹—as much on one as on another. Now as the premises are untrue, so the conclusion is unfirm. For if our Saviour’s apparition unto his disciples, were of itself sufficient to create a Sabbath, then must that day whereon St. Peter went on fishing, be a Sabbath also; and so must Holy Thursday too, it being most evident that Christ appeared on those days unto his apostles. So that as yet, from our Redeemer’s resurrection unto his ascension, we find not any word or *item* of a new Christian Sabbath to be kept amongst them, or

¹ Acts i. 3.

any evidence for the *Lord's-day* in the four Evangelists, either in precept or practice.

The first particular passage which doth occur in Holy Scripture touching the first day of the week, is, that upon that day the Holy Ghost did first come down on the apostles; and that upon the same, St. Peter preached his first sermon unto the Jews, and baptized such of them as believed; there being added to the church that day, three thousand souls.¹ This happened on the feast of *Pentecost*, which fell that year upon the Sunday, or first day of the week; but as it was a special and a casual thing, so can it yield but little proof, if it yield us any, that the *Lord's day* was then observed, or that the Holy Ghost did—by selecting of that day for his descent on the apostles—intend to dignify it for a Sabbath. For, first, it was a casual thing that Pentecost should fall that year upon the Sunday. It was a moveable feast as unto the day, such as did change and shift itself according to the position of the feast of Passover. So that as often as the Passover did fall upon the Saturday or *Sabbath*—as this year it did—then Pentecost fell upon the *Sunday*. And if the rule be true, (as I think it is,) *that no sufficient argument can be drawn from a casual fact*, and that the falling of the Pentecost that year upon the first day of the week, be merely casual, the coming of the Holy Ghost upon that day, will be no argument nor authority to state

¹ Acts ii.

the first day of the week in the place and honour of the Jewish Sabbath.

As for St. Peter's preaching upon that day, and the baptizing of so many as were converted to the faith upon the same, it might have been some proof that now at least, if not before, the first day of the week was set apart by the apostles for religious exercises, had they not honoured all days with the same performances. But if we search the scriptures, we shall easily find that all days were alike to them in that respect. Or were it that the scriptures had not told us of it, yet natural reason would inform us, that those who were employed in so great a work as the conversion of the world, could not confine themselves unto times and seasons, but must take all advantages whensoever they came. But for the scripture, it is said in express terms—first generally: "that the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."¹ And in the fifth chapter of the Acts, "and daily in the temple and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." (verse 42.) So for particulars: when Philip did baptize the eunuch, either he did it on a working day as we now distinguish them, and not upon the first day of the week, and so it was no Lord's-day duty; or else it was not held unlawful to take a journey on that day, as some think it is. St. Peter's preaching to Cornelius, and his baptizing of that house, was a week-day's work, as may

¹ Acts ii. 47.

be gathered from St Hierom; who tells us that the day whereon the vision appeared to Peter, was probably either the Sabbath or the Lord's-day (as we call it now;) and choose you which you will, we shall find little reason in it for a Christian Sabbath. In case it was on the Sabbath, then Peter did not keep the Lord's-day holy; for the text tells us, that the next day he did begin his journey to Cornelius' house.

In case it was upon the Lord's-day, then neither did St. Peter sanctify that day in the congregation, as he ought to do, had that day then been made the Sabbath, and his conversion of Cornelius being three days after, must of necessity be done on the Wednesday following. So for St. Paul, who laboured more abundantly than the other apostles, it may appear in general that he observed no Lord's-day Sabbath, but taught on all days, travelled on all days, and wrought according to his trade upon all days too, when he had no employment in the congregation. That he did teach on all days is not to be questioned by any that considers how great a work he had to do, and how little time. That he did travel upon all days is no less notorious to all that look upon his life, which was still in motion. And howsoever he might rest sometimes on the Lord's-day, as questionless he did on others, as often as upon that day he preached the gospel; yet when he was a prisoner in the hands of the Roman soldiers, there is no doubt that he

travelled as they did—Lord's-days and Sabbaths, all days equally, many days together. Lastly, for working at his trade (which was tent making) on the Lord's-day as well as others, it is proved out of Hierom, that when he had none unto whom to preach in the congregation, he followed on the Lord's-day the works of his occupation. Now what is proved of these apostles, and of St. Philip the evangelist, may be affirmed of all the rest, whose lives and actions are not left upon record in the holy Scriptures. Their ministry being the same, and their work as great, no question that their liberty was correspondent, and that they took all times to be alike in the advancing of the business which they went about, and cherished all occasions presented to them on what day soever.

The Scripture tells us somewhat that St. Paul did at Troas, upon the first day of the week. The passage in the text stands thus: "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his speech until midnight."¹ Take notice here, that Paul had tarried there seven days, before this happened. "Either," saith St. Austin, "they were assembled on the beginning of the night which did immediately follow the Sabbath-day, and was to be accounted as a part of the Lord's day, or first day of the week, and breaking bread that night, continued his dis-

¹ Acts xx. 7.

course till midnight, that so he might begin his journey with the first dawning of the Lord's day, which was then at hand; or, if they did not meet till the day itself, since it is there expressed, that he preached unto them, being to depart upon the morrow—we have the reason why he continued his discourse so long, viz. because he was to leave them—and he desired to lesson them sufficiently before he left them." Choose which of these you will, and there will be but little found for sanctifying the Lord's day, by St. Paul at Troas. For if this meeting were upon Saturday night, then made St. Paul no scruple of travelling upon the Sunday; or if it were on the Sunday, and that the breaking bread there mentioned, was the celebration of the sacrament, yet neither that, nor the discourse or sermon which was joined unto it were otherwise than occasional only, by reason of St. Paul's departure on the morrow. Therefore, no *Sabbath* to be hence collected.

Take which you will, either of the fathers or the moderns, and we shall find no Lord's day instituted by any *apostolical mandate*; no Sabbath set on foot by them upon the first day of the week, as some would have it; much less that any such ordinance should be hence collected out of these words of the Apostle Paul.¹ Indeed it is not probable, that he who so opposed himself against the *old Sabbath*, would erect a *new*. This had not been to abrogate the ceremony, but to

¹ 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.

change the day; whereas he laboured what he could to beat down all the difference of days and times.

In his epistle to the Galatians, written anno 59, he lays it home unto their charge, that they "observed days, and months, and times, and years;"¹ and seems a little to bewail his own misfortune, as if he had bestowed his labour in vain amongst them. So in the epistle to the Colossians, in the sixtieth year after Christ's nativity, St. Paul lays it positively down, that the *Sabbath* was now abrogated with the other ceremonies, which were to vanish at Christ's coming. "Let no man, therefore, judge you," saith the apostle, "in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath-days; which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."² In which the Sabbath is well matched with meats, and drinks, new moons and holy days, which were all temporary ordinances, and to go off the stage at our Saviour's entrance. Now whereas some, that would be thought great sticklers for the Sabbath, conceive that this was spoken, not of the weekly *moral Sabbath*, as they call it, which must be perpetual, but of the *annual ceremonial Sabbaths*, which they acknowledge to be abrogated; this new device directly crosseth the whole current of the ancient Fathers, who do apply this text to the *weekly Sabbath*.

¹ Gal. iv. 10. ² Coloss. ii, 16, 17.

The religious observation of the first day of the week beginning in the age of the Apostles—no doubt with their approbation and authority, and since continuing in the same respect for so many ages—may be very well accounted amongst those Apostolical traditions, which have been universally received in the church of God. For it being the day which our Redeemer honoured with his resurrection, it easily might attain unto that esteem, as to be honoured by the Christians with the public meetings; that so they might, with greater comfort, preserve and cherish the memorial of so great a mercy; in reference unto which the world's creation seemed not so considerable. By reason of which work wrought on it, it came, in time, to be entitled the Lord's day; which attribute is first found in the Revelation, writ by St. John about the 94th year from our Saviour's birth. So long it was, before we find the Church took notice of it by a proper name. Whereas some have gathered from this text of the Revelation—St. John's being "in the spirit on the Lord's day,"—(as the phrase is) that the Lord's day is wholly to be spent in spiritual exercises; their conceit might probably have had some show of likelihood, had it been said by the Apostle, that he had been in the spirit *every* Lord's day. But being as it is a particular case, it can make no rule, unless it be that every man on the Lord's-day should have dreams and visions, and be inspired that day with the spirit of prophecy;

no more than if it had been told us, upon what day St. Paul had been rapt up into the third heaven, every man should upon that day expect the like celestial raptures. It is thought by some, that the Lord's day here mentioned, is not to be interpreted of the first day of the week, as we use to take it, but of the day of his last coming,—of the day of judgment, wherein all flesh shall come together to receive their sentence,—which being called the Lord's day too—("that so the spirit may be saved, in the day of the Lord Jesus"),¹ St. John might see it, being rapt in spirit, as if come already.

Clemens Alexandrinus, who flourished in the year 190, saith, "We ought to honour
"and to reverence Him, whom we are verily
"persuaded to be the Word, our Saviour, and
"our Captain; and in him the Father: not in
"selected times as some do amongst us, but
"always during our whole lives, and on all
"occasions. The royal prophet tells us that
"he praised God seven times a day. Whence,
"he that understands himself, stands not upon
"determinate places, or appointed temples,
"much less on any festivals, or days assigned;
"but in all places honours God, though he be
"alone." And a little after, "making our
"whole lives a continual festival, and know-
"ing God to be every where, we praise him
"sometimes in the fields, and sometimes sailing
"on the seas, and finally, in all the times of
"our life whatever." So in another place of

¹ 1 Cor. v. 5.

the same book: "He that doth lead his life according to the ordinances of the gospel, then keeps the *Lord's-day*, when he casts away every evil thought, and doing things with knowledge and understanding, doth glorify the Lord in his resurrection."

"Tell me," saith Origen, (who flourished in the third century) "you that frequent the church on the feast days only, are not all days festival? are not all the Lord's? It appertains unto the Jews to observe days and festivals; the Christians every day eat the flesh of the Lamb." And in another place, "He truly keeps the festivals, that performs his duty; praying continually, and offering every day the unbloody sacrifice in his prayers to God. Which whosoever doth, and is upright in thought, word, and deed, adhering always unto God our natural Lord, every day is to him a *Lord's-day*."

The Emperor Constantine being the first Christian prince that publicly professed the gospel, was the first also who made any law about the keeping of *Sunday*. Of him Eusebius tells us, that thinking that the chiefest and most proper day for the devotion of his subjects, he presently declared his pleasure—"That every one who lived in the Roman Empire should take their ease or rest on that day." Now where the soldiers in his camp were partly Christians and partly Gentiles, it was permitted unto them who professed the gospel, upon the *Sunday* (so he calls it,) freely to go unto the churches, and

there offer up their prayers unto Almighty God. But such as had continued still in their ancient errors, were ordered to assemble in the open fields upon those days, and on a signal given, to make their prayers unto the Lord, after a form by him prescribed.

Nor did he only take upon him to command or appoint the day, as to all his subjects, and to prescribe a form of prayer, as unto the Gentiles, but to decree what works should be allowed upon it, and what intermitted. In former times, though the Lord's day had got the credit, as to be honoured with the public meetings of the congregation, yet was it not so strictly kept, no, not in time of divine service, but that the public magistrates, judges, and other ministers of state, were to attend those great employments they were called unto, without relation to this day, or cessation on it, and so did other men that had less employments, and those not so necessary.

These things, this Emperor taking into consideration, and finding no necessity, but that his judges, and other public ministers might attend God's service on that day, at least not be a means to keep others from it; and knowing that such as dwelt in cities had sufficient leisure to frequent the church, and that artificers, without any public discommodity, might for that time forbear their ordinary labours; he ordered and appointed that all of them, in their several places, should this day lay aside their own business to attend the Lord's

But then withal considering, that such as followed husbandry, could not so well neglect the times of seed and harvest, but that they were to take advantage of the fairest and most seasonable weather, as God pleased to send it; he left it free to them to follow their affairs on what day soever, lest otherwise they might lose those blessings which God in his great bounty had bestowed upon them.

St. Hierom tells us of *Paula*, a most devout and pious woman who lived in Bethlehem, accompanied with many virgins and poor widows, in manner of a nunnery. Of whom he saith, that every Lord's-day they repaired to the church of God; and after their return from thence, they set themselves unto their tasks, which was the making of garments for themselves or others; a thing which questionless so good a woman had not done, and much less ordered it to be done by others, had it been then accounted an unlawful act.

Thus we see that the Lord's-day stands on custom first, and voluntary consecration of it to religious meetings; that custom countenanced by the authority of the church, which tacitly approved the same; and finally, confirmed and ratified by Christian princes throughout their empires. And as the day, so *rest* from labours and restraint from business upon that day, received its greatest strength from the supreme magistrate, as long as he retained that power which to him belonged; as after from the *canons* and decrees of councils, the *decretals* of popes, and orders

of particular prelates, when the sole managing of ecclesiastical affairs was committed to them. I hope it was not so with the former *Sabbath*, which neither took original from custom, (that people not being so forward to give God a day,) nor required any countenance or authority from the kings of *Israel* to confirm and ratify it. The Lord had spoken the word, that he would have one day in seven—precisely the *seventh day* from the world's creation—to be a day of rest unto all his people; which said, there was no more to do, but gladly to submit and obey his pleasure. And this done all at once; not by degrees, by little and little, as he could see the people affected to it, or as he found it fittest for them,—like a *probation* law made to continue till the next session, and then, on further liking, to hold good for ever,—but by a plain and peremptory order that it should be so, without further trial. But thus it was not done in our present business. The *Lord's-day* had no such command that it should be sanctified; but was left plainly to God's people to pitch on this, or any other, for the public use. And being taken up amongst them, and made a day of meeting in the congregation for religious exercises, yet, for three hundred years, there was neither law to bind them to it, nor any rest from labour or from worldly businesses required upon it. And when it seemed good unto Christian princes to lay restraints upon their people, yet at the first they were not general, but only thus: that certain

EXTRACTS

FROM "CALVIN'S INSTITUTES."

ON THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT.

WE are taught in many places, that the adumbration of the spiritual rest was the principal design of the Sabbath. For the Lord is hardly so strict in his requisitions of obedience to any other precept.

When He means to intimate in the prophets, that religion is totally subverted, he complains that his Sabbaths are polluted, violated, neglected, and profaned :¹ as though, in case of that duty being neglected, there remained no other way in which he could be honoured. On the other hand, he notices the observance of it with singular encomiums. Wherefore also among the other Divine communications, the faithful used very highly to esteem the revelation of the Sabbath. For this is the language of the Levites in a solemn assembly recorded by Nehemiah,² "Thou madest known unto our fathers thy holy Sabbath, and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses." We see the singular estimation in which it is held among all the commandments of the law. All these things tend to display the dignity of the

¹ Jer. xvii. 21. 27.

² Nehemiah ix. 14.

mystery, which is beautifully expressed by Moses and Ezekiel. In Exodus we read as follows: "Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a *sign* between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the Sabbath, therefore; for it is holy unto you. *The children of Israel* shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever."¹ This is more fully expressed by Ezekiel; but the substance of what he says, is, that the Sabbath was a *sign*, from which the Israelites might know that God was their sanctifier.² If our sanctification consist properly in a mortification of our will, there is a very natural analogy between the external sign, and the internal thing which it represents. We must rest altogether, that God may operate within us; we must recede from our own will, resign our own heart, and renounce our carnal affections; in short, we must cease from all the efforts of our own understandings, that having God operating within us, we may enjoy rest in him, as we are also taught by the apostle.³

All that is of a ceremonial nature was, without doubt, abolished by the advent of the Lord Christ. For He is the Truth, at whose presence all figures disappear; the Body, on the prospect of which all the shadows are

¹ Exod. xxxi. 13, 17. ² Ezek. xx. 12. ³ Heb. v. 9.

relinquished. He, I say, is the true fulfilment of the Sabbath. Having been "buried with him by baptism, we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, that being partakers of his resurrection, we may walk in newness of life."¹ Therefore the apostle says in another place, that "the Sabbath was a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ:"² that is the real substance of the truth, which he has beautifully explained in that passage. This is contained not in one day, but in the whole course of our life, till, being wholly dead to ourselves, we be filled with the life of God. Christians, therefore, ought to depart from all superstitious observance of days.

I do not lay so much stress on the septenary number, that I would oblige the church to an invariable adherence to it; nor will I condemn those churches which have other solemn days for their assemblies, provided they keep at a distance from superstition. And this will be the case, if they be only designed for the observance of discipline and well regulated order.

As the truth was delivered to the Jews under a figure, so it is given to us without any shadows; first, in order that during our whole life we should meditate on a perpetual rest from our own works, that the Lord may operate within us by his Spirit; secondly, that every man, whenever he has leisure, should diligently exercise himself in private,

¹ Rom. vi. 4, &c. ² Col. ii. 16, 17.

in pious reflections on the works of God ; and also that we should, at the same time, observe the legitimate order of the church ; thirdly, that we should not unkindly oppress those who are subject to us. Thus vanish all the dreams of false prophets, who in past ages have infected the people with a Jewish notion, affirming that nothing but the ceremonial part of this commandment, which according to them is the appointment of the seventh day, has been abrogated ; but that the moral part of it, that is the observance of one day in seven, still remains. But this is only changing the day in contempt of the Jews, while they retain the same opinion of the holiness of a day ; for on this principle, the same mysterious signification would still be attributed to particular days, which they formerly obtained among the Jews. And indeed we see what advantages have arisen from such a sentiment. For those who adhere to it, far exceed the Jews in a gross, carnal, and superstitious observance of the Sabbath ; so that the reproofs, which we find in Isaiah, are equally as applicable to them in the present age, as to those whom the prophet reprov'd in his time. But the principal thing to be remembered is, the general doctrine, that, lest religion decay or languish amongst us, sacred assemblies ought diligently to be held ; and that we ought to use those external means which are adapted to support the worship of God.

EXTRACTS
FROM A
DISCOURSE ON THE SABBATH,

Delivered at Oxford, Anno 1622, by Dr. PRIDEAUX.

THE weekly Sabbath mentioned in the decalogue, being it is become to many a rock of offence, it will not, haply, be unwelcome to the wavering mind, so to determine of the point, that they may have something whereupon to fasten. There is not any thing now more frequent in some zealots' mouths, than that the *Lord's-day* is with us licentiously profaned;—the fourth commandment produced and expounded literally, as if it did as much oblige us Christians, as it did once the Jews. And to this purpose, all such texts of the Old Testament which seem to press the rigorous keeping of that day, are alleged at once; and thereupon some men are most superstitiously persuaded, neither to kindle a fire in the winter time wherewith to warm themselves, or to dress meat for the sustentation of the poor;—which trench not more upon the bounds of Christian liberty, than they do break the bonds of Christian charity.

The institution of the Sabbath is generally referred to God, by all who are instructed by the word of God, that he created all things, and hath since governed the same. But touching the *original* of this institution, and

promulgation of the same, it is not agreed upon amongst the learned. Some fetch the original thereof from the beginning of the world, when God first "blessed the seventh day and sanctified it;" whence well this question may be raised:—*whether before the publishing of Moses' law, the Sabbath was to be observed by the law of nature?* They which are commonly more apt to say any thing, than able afterwards to prove it, maintain affirmatively that it was:—"for," say they, "Is it not all one, to bless and sanctify "the seventh day in the beginning of the "world, as to impose it then on the posterity "of Adam to be blessed and sanctified? If "all the rest of the commandments flow from "the principles of nature, how is this excluded? Can we conceive that this only "ceremonial law crept in, we know not how, "amongst the morals? Or that the prophet "Moses would have used such care in ordering the decalogue, only to bring the church "into greater troubles?" Add hereunto, that Torniellus thinks it hardly credible that Enoch should apart himself from the sons of Cain to call upon the name of the Lord, without some certain and appointed time for that performance. "Tell me," (say they) "who can, "wherefore, before the publication of the law "of Moses, there fell no manna on the "seventh day? Had not the Sabbath, according to God's first example, been kept "continually from the foundation of the "world?" These are indeed such argu-

as make a *fair flourish*, but *conclude nothing*. Tertullian, a most ancient writer, maintains the contrary: "Let them," (saith he, in a particular tract against the Jews) "assure me "if they can, that Adam ever kept the Sabbath;—or Abel, when he offered unto God "his accepted sacrifice, had regard thereof;— "or that Noah kept the same, when he was "busied in preparing of the ark against the "deluge;—or, finally, that Abraham, in offering his son Isaac,—or that Melchisedec, in "the execution of his priesthood, took notice "of it." Eusebius doth, by this argument, maintain the ancient Patriarchs to have been Christians (as we are) in very truth, though not in name: because that neither they nor we observed the Sabbath of the Jews. And thereupon it is observed by Justin Martyr, in his dialogue with Trypho—and Bede in his Hexameron—that many of those of former times were renowned for sanctity, which neither kept the Sabbath, nor were circumcised. Which also is expressly held by Abulensis.

For what weak proofs are they which before were urged:—God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it; therefore he *then* commanded it to be kept holy by his people. Moses spake this by way of *anticipation*; rather to show the *equity* of the commandment, than the *original*. Enoch might call upon the Lord, and Abraham offer sacrifice, without relation to a set and appointed time; oftener and seldomer, as they had occasion.

And as for the not falling of the manna on the Sabbath-day, this rather was a *preparation* to the commandment, than any promulgation of it. For put the case,—that Jacob on the Sabbath had neglected Laban's flocks; and that the Israelites under Pharoah, had not made up their tale of bricks, neither had he escaped a chiding, nor they the insolent fury of their taskmasters. And now, according to the principles of these Sabbatarians, what would you counsel them to do? Did they *observe* the Sabbath, they were sure of punishment from man; did they *neglect* it, they were sure of vengeance from the Lord. Unto such straits are they reduced, who would impose the Sabbath as a perpetual law of nature, upon the consciences of their poor brethren.

I will look upon the text apart, and ask precisely what it commands us?—First, there presents itself in the very front, the sanctifying of the Sabbath. What Sabbath? The seventh day. How reckoned? From the first of the creation. But this falls just upon the day of the Jewish Sabbath; and so to urge this commandment for keeping of the Lord's day, is to bring in Judaism. Whence, truly said St. Austin: "He that observes that day according to the literal sense, is but carnally wise." They, therefore, are but idly busied, who would so far enlarge the Sabbath or seventh day in this commandment, as to include the Lord's-day in it; or so to order their account, as that the Sabbath of the Je-

should fall jump with ours ; as if there were an end of Christian congregations in case they were not borrowed from the Jewish synagogue ; or that the institution of the Lord's-day were of no effect, were it not strengthened and supported by the fourth commandment. Having found the institution of the Jewish Sabbath in the fourth commandment, confirmed by the example of God himself, who (almost) would not thus reason with himself ? I see a precept, ranked amongst other moral precepts, which doth command me to observe the seventh day precisely, from the first creation ; and since the others are in force, why is not this ? It neither fits the church nor me, to repeal the law of God at our discretion, but rather to obey his pleasure. What then advise we to be done ? Not as some do, who urge the words of this commandment so far, till they draw blood instead of comfort. Our Saviour best resolves this doubt, saying : "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath ; therefore the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath."¹ But here it is objected, that Christ came into the world not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it. To which we say with the apostle ; Do we destroy the law by faith ? God forbid ! we confirm it rather. Christ, then, hath put away the *shadow*, but retained the *light*, and spreads it wider than before ; showing thereby the excellent harmony betwixt the gospel and the law.

¹ Mark ii. 27.

St. Paul¹ doth generally tax the Jewish observation of *days* and *times*; particularly he sheweth us, that the Sabbath is abrogated:² "Let no man judge you," *i. e.* let none condemn you if you keep them not; because these shadows altogether vanished at the rising of the Sun of Righteousness. As therefore nature requires meat and drink,—but for the choice thereof we are left free, to Christian liberty; so reason tells us, that there must be some certain time appointed for God's public service; though from the bondage and necessity of the Jewish Sabbath, we are delivered by the gospel. For who knows not that common principle of the schoolmen, out of the Hebrews:³ "The priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law?" Whence they conclude, that at this day the moral law bindeth not as it was published and proclaimed by Moses, but as at first it appertained no less unto the Gentiles than the Jews; and afterwards was explained and confirmed by Christ in his holy gospel.

Nor do they observe how they entangle themselves, by borrowing the authority of the Lord's day from the law of Moses: for if they ground themselves upon that commandment, why keep they not that day precisely, which the text commandeth? By what authority have they substituted the first day of the week for the seventh, exactly from the world's creation?

¹ Rom. xiv. and Gal. iv. ² Coloss. ii. 16, 17. ³ Heb. vii

For those that make their boast, that they have found the institution of the *Lord's day* in the New Testament, expressly—let them shew the place. Our Saviour oftentimes disputed with the Pharisees about their superstitious observation of the Sabbath day, and many times explained the meaning of that commandment; but where is any mention, that the *Lord's day* was instituted in the place thereof?

Since there is not extant either commandment or example in the gospel, which can affix the rest of the Jewish Sabbath to the Lord's day now celebrated; and that our Christian liberty will not away with that severe and ceremonial kind of rest which was then in use; we only are so far to abstain from work, as it is an impediment to the performance of such duties as are there commanded. St. Hierom on the 18th of the Acts affirmeth, that St. Paul, when he had none to whom to preach in the congregation, did, on the Lord's day, use the works of his occupation:—and Christ did many things (as of set purpose) on the Sabbath, to manifest that the legal Sabbath was expiring, and to demonstrate the true use of the Christian Sabbath; if (at the least) the name of *Sabbath* may be used amongst us, which some distaste. To end in brief, those things are all *commanded*, which do advance God's public service; and those *permitted*, which are no hinderance thereunto.

EXTRACTS
FROM WILLIAM PENN'S WORKS.

Second Vol. 8vo. pages 51 and 479.

WORSHIP was not made for time, but time for worship: nor is there any day holy of itself, though holy things may be performed upon a day. If a Sabbath-day be moral because mentioned in the fourth commandment, then, because the *Jew's* seventh-day Sabbath is there particularly mentioned, *their* Sabbath must be only moral, and consequently unalterable.

If the fourth commandment be as moral as all the rest—as it must be, if it be moral, because of its being there—they could no more dispense with *it* than with any *other* commandment: to call that day moral, and make it alterable, is ridiculous. It is true the apostles met on the first day, and not on the seventh; but as that released us from any pretended morality of the seventh, so neither did it confer any morality upon the first:—yea, so far were they from it, that not one speaks any such thing, but Paul much the contrary.¹ The outward Sabbath was typical of the great rest of the gospel; which, such come to who cease from their own works, and in whom the works of God's

¹ Coloss. ii. 16, 17.

new creation come to be accomplished. And though I should acknowledge the other commandments to be moral,—yea, and times, too, both respecting God's worship and the creature's rest,—yet there is no more reason for the morality of that day because amongst those commandments, than for the ceremoniousness and abrogation of several moral precepts, because scattered up and down among the ceremonial laws recorded in Leviticus.

I grant the apostles met on that day,—but must it therefore be moral? Certainly, the scriptures' silence in this particular must either conclude a great neglect against those holy men, in not recommending and enjoining more expressly, both *water, bread, wine, and holy days*, in their several epistles to the churches, or warrant us in our belief concerning the temporariness of those things. Let not our adversary reproach us for not believing that to be durable which was weaning off and vanishing in those days; but soberly consider, that the practice of the best men—especially in such cases—is no institution, though sometimes it may be an example.

How is it known that John's being in the spirit upon the *Lord's-day*, was the *first* day of the week? Or what institution can be inferred from its being called the *Lord's-day*, in case John meant so? He, certainly, little deserves to be styled an *evangelical minister*, who, instead of preaching the end of all holy

days, feasts, new moons, solemn assemblies, and Sabbath-days, is asserting and maintaining the absolute necessity and service of them under the gospel. "Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath-days, which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."¹ This doctrine, Paul preached and wrote; how then it should be evangelical to institute a second visible Sabbath in the room or place of the first, when the first was abrogated as shadowy, is absurd and incongruous; for the reason of the visible and external rest, was the visible and external creation; but because the second creation is invisible and spiritual, by the invisible word of his power—viz. the regeneration and redemption of the soul of man, (begetting him anew to God,) therefore should the gospel Sabbath be also spiritual and invisible,—to which these words refer: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."² We which have believed, do enter into rest. There remaineth, therefore, a rest to the people of God.³

¹ Coloss. ii. 16, 17. ² Matt. ii. 28. ³ Heb. iv. 3. 9.

EXTRACTS
FROM
DR. PALEY'S MORAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY.
ON
THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT OF SAB-
BATICAL INSTITUTIONS.

IN my opinion, the transaction in the wilderness¹ was the first actual institution of the Sabbath. For if the Sabbath had been instituted at the time of the creation, as the words in Genesis may seem at first sight to import; and if it had been observed all along from that time to the departure of the Jews out of Egypt—a period of about two thousand five hundred years—it appears unaccountable that no mention of it,—no occasion of even the obscurest allusion to it, should occur, either in the general history of the world before the call of Abraham, which contains, we admit, only a few memoirs of its early ages, and those extremely abridged; or, which is more to be wondered at, in that of the lives of the first three Jewish Patriarchs, which, in many parts of the account, is sufficiently circumstantial and domestic. Nor is there, in the passage above quoted,² any intimation that the Sabbath, when appointed to be observed, was only the revival of an

¹ Exod. xvi.

² Exod. xvi. 21, 30.

ancient institution, which had been neglected, forgotten, or suspended ; nor is any such neglect imputed either to the inhabitants of the old world, or to any part of the family of Noah ; nor, lastly, is any permission recorded, to dispense with the institution during the captivity of the Jews in Egypt, or on any other public emergency.

The passage in the 2d chap. of Genesis, which creates the whole controversy upon the subject, is not inconsistent with this opinion :—for as the seventh day was erected into a Sabbath on account of God's resting upon that day from the work of the creation, it was natural in the historian, when he had related the history of the creation, and of God's ceasing from it on the seventh day, to add, "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it ; because that on it he had rested from all his work which God created and made ;" although the blessing and sanctification—*i. e.* the religious distinction and appropriation of that day—were not actually made till many ages afterwards. The words do not assert that God *then* "blessed" and "sanctified" the seventh day, but that He blessed and sanctified it *for that reason* : and if any ask why the Sabbath, or sanctification of the seventh day, was *then* mentioned, if it was not *then* appointed, the answer is at hand :—the order of connexion, and not of time, introduced the mention of the Sabbath, in the history of the subject which it was ordained to commemorate.

This interpretation is strongly supported by a passage in the prophet Ezekiel, where the Sabbath is plainly spoken of as *given* (and what else can that mean, but as *first instituted*?) in the wilderness.¹

Nehemiah, also, recounts the promulgation of the Sabbatical law amongst the transactions in the wilderness; which supplies another considerable argument in aid of our opinion.²

If it be enquired what duties were appointed for the Jewish Sabbath, and under what penalties, and in what manner it was observed amongst the ancient Jews, we find that, by the fourth commandment, a strict cessation from work was enjoined, not only upon Jews by birth, or religious profession, but upon all who resided within the limits of the Jewish state; that the same was to be permitted to their slaves and their cattle; that this rest was not to be violated under pain of death — “Whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath-day, he shall surely be put to death.”³ Besides which, the seventh day was to be solemnized by double sacrifices in the temple.⁴ Also *holy convocations* were directed to be holden on the Sabbath-day.⁵

If the divine command was actually delivered at the creation, it was addressed, no doubt, to the whole human species alike; and

¹ Ezek. xx. 10, 11, 12. ² Chap. ix. 12, 13, 14. ³ Exod. xxxi. 15.

⁴ Numb. xxviii. 9, 10.

⁵ Levit. xxiii. 3.

continues, unless repealed by some subsequent revelation, binding upon all who come to the knowledge of it. If the command was published for the first time in the wilderness, then it was immediately directed to the Jewish people alone; and something further, either in the subject or circumstances of the command, will be necessary to shew that it was designed for any other. It is on this account that the question concerning the date of the institution was first to be considered. The former opinion precludes all debate about the extent of the obligation: the latter admits, and, *primâ facie*, induces a belief, that the Sabbath ought to be considered as part of the peculiar law of the Jewish polity. Which belief receives great confirmation from the following arguments: viz.

The Sabbath is described as a sign between God and the people of Israel: "wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations for a perpetual covenant; *it is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever.*"¹ Again: "and I gave them my statutes, and shewed them my judgments, which if a man do he shall even live in them; *more-over also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them,* that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them."² Now it does not seem easy to understand, how the Sabbath could be a *sign* between

¹ Exodus xxxi. 16, 17. ² Ezekiel xx. 11, 12.

God and the people of Israel, unless the observance of it was peculiar to that people, and designed so to be.

The distinction of the Sabbath is, in its nature, as much a positive ceremonial institution, as that of many other seasons which were appointed by the Levitical Law to be kept holy, and to be observed by a strict rest; as the first and seventh days of unleavened bread; the feast of Pentecost; the feast of tabernacles;—and in the 23d chap. of Exodus, the Sabbath and these are recited together.

If the command by which the Sabbath was instituted be binding upon Christians, it must be binding as to the day, the duties, and the penalty; in none of which it is received.

The observance of the Sabbath was not one of the articles enjoined by the apostles¹ upon them, “which, from among the Gentiles, “were turned unto God.”

St. Paul evidently appears to have considered the Sabbath as part of the Jewish ritual, and not obligatory upon Christians as such.²

I am aware of only two objections which can be opposed to the force of these arguments; one is, that the reason assigned in the fourth commandment for hallowing the seventh day, namely, “because God rested on the seventh day from the work of the creation,” is a reason which pertains to all mankind: the other, that the command

¹ Acts xv.

² Coloss. ii. 16, 17.

which enjoins the observance of the Sabbath is inserted in the decalogue, of which all the other precepts and prohibitions are of moral and universal obligation.

Upon the first objection it may be remarked, that although in Exodus the commandment is founded upon God's rest from the creation, in Deuteronomy the commandment is repeated with a reference to a different event:—"Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work; thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou: and remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm; *therefore* the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day."¹ It is farther observable, that God's rest from the creation is proposed as the reason of the institution, even where the institution itself is spoken of as peculiar to the Jews:—"Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generation, for a perpetual covenant: it is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever; *for* in six days the Lord made heaven and earth,

¹ Deuteronomy v. 13, 14, 15.

and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.”¹ The truth is, these different reasons were assigned, to account for different circumstances in the command. If a Jew enquired why the *seventh day* was sanctified rather than the sixth or eighth, his law told him, because God rested on the *seventh day* from the creation. If he asked, Why was the same rest indulged to *slaves*? his law bade him remember, that he also was a *slave* in the land of Egypt, and “that the Lord his God brought him out thence.” In this view, the two reasons are perfectly compatible with each other, and with a third end of the institution, its being a *sign* between God and the people of Israel; but in this view they determine nothing concerning the extent of the obligation. If the reason by its proper energy had constituted a natural obligation, or if it had been mentioned with a view to the extent of the obligation, we should submit to the conclusion, that all were comprehended by the command who are concerned in the reason. But the Sabbatic rest being a duty which results from the ordination and authority of a positive law, the reason can be alleged no farther than as it explains the design of the legislator: and if it appear to be recited with an intentional application to one part of the law, it explains his design upon no other; if it be mentioned merely to account for the choice of the day, it does not explain his design as to the extent of the obligation.

¹ Exod. xxxi. 16, 17.

With respect to the second objection, that inasmuch as the other nine commandments are confessedly of moral, and universal obligation, it may reasonably be presumed that this is of the same; we answer, that this argument will have less weight when it is considered, that the distinction between positive and natural duties, like other distinctions of modern ethics, was unknown to the simplicity of ancient language; and that there are various passages of scripture, in which duties of a political, or ceremonial, or positive nature, and confessedly of partial obligation, are enumerated, and without any mark of discrimination, along with others which are natural and universal. Of this Ezek. xviii. 5, 9, is an incontestable example.

The same thing may be observed of the apostolic decree recorded in the 15th chapter of the Acts.

The practice of holding religious assemblies upon the first day of the week, was so early and universal in the Christian Church, that 't carries with it considerable proof of having originated from some precept of Christ, or of his Apostles, though none such be now extant.

A cessation upon that day from labour beyond the time of attendance upon public worship, is not intimated in any passage of the New Testament; nor did Christ or his Apostles deliver, that we know of, any command to their disciples for a discontinuance, upon that day, of the common offices of their professions; a reserve which none will se

reason to wonder at, or to blame as a defect in the institution, who consider that, in the primitive condition of Christianity, the observance of a new Sabbath would have been useless, or inconvenient, or impracticable. During Christ's personal ministry, his religion was preached to the Jews alone. *They* already had a Sabbath, which, as citizens and subjects of that economy, they were obliged to keep; and did keep. It was not therefore probable that Christ would enjoin another day of rest in conjunction with this. When the new religion came forth into the Gentile world, converts to it were, for the most part, made from those classes of society who have not their time and labour at their own disposal; and it was scarcely to be expected, that unbelieving masters and magistrates, and they who directed the employment of others, would permit their slaves and labourers to rest from their work every seventh day: or that civil government, indeed, would have submitted to the loss of the seventh part of the public industry, and that, too, in addition to the numerous festivals which the national religions indulged to the people; at least, this would have been an encumbrance, which might have greatly retarded the reception of Christianity in the world. In reality, the institution of a weekly Sabbath is so connected with the functions of civil life, and requires so much of the concurrence of civil law, in its regulation and support, that it cannot, perhaps, properly be

made the ordinance of any religion, till that religion be received as the religion of the state.

The opinion that Christ and his apostles meant to retain the duties of the Jewish Sabbath, shifting only the day from the seventh to the first, seems to prevail without sufficient proof: nor does any evidence remain in Scripture (of what, however, is not improbable,) that the first day of the week was thus distinguished in commemoration of our Lord's resurrection.

The conclusion from the whole enquiry (for it is our business to follow the arguments to whatever probability they conduct us,) is this: The *assembling* upon the first day of the week for the purpose of public worship and religious instruction, is a law of Christianity, of *Divine* appointment; the *resting* on that day from our employments longer than we are detained from them by attendance upon these assemblies, is to Christians an ordinance of *human* institution; binding nevertheless upon the conscience of every individual of a country in which a weekly Sabbath is established, for the sake of the beneficial purposes which the public and regular observance of it promotes, and recommended perhaps in some degree to the Divine approbation, by the resemblance it bears to what God was pleased to make a solemn part of the law which he delivered to the people of Israel, and by its subserviency to many of the same uses.

EXTRACTS

FROM "TRUTH ADVOCATED," IN LETTERS
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESBYTERIANS,

By "VINDEK," (Philadelphia, 1823.)

IN your Confession of Faith, chap. xxi. § 7, we are told that the fourth commandment *is perpetually binding upon all men in all ages*. Where your theologians have found data for this assertion, I am at a loss to discover; certainly not in the Bible, as I shall proceed to show:—

1. The command to observe a Sabbath is met with no where but in the law of Moses, and this command was limited to the Jews. "Wherefore *the children of Israel* shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout *their* generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is *a sign* between me and the children of Israel for ever."¹ Here the children of Israel are expressly mentioned, *and they only*. There is no evidence on record, that the keeping of a Sabbath was ever enjoined upon any other nation or people.

2. This institution ended with the Jewish polity; there is neither precept nor command

¹ Exodus xxxi. 16, 17.

in the New Testament, making the observance of a Sabbath obligatory under the Christian dispensation.

For proof of this I need only refer to the book itself. It is never once mentioned, neither by Christ, nor his apostles; and the only testimony brought forward to support it is barely presumptive. Thus it is said:

1. That Christ appeared to his disciples after his resurrection, on the first day of the week; and this circumstance constituted it a Sabbath. Now what connexion is there between our Lord's thus appearing, and the institution of a Sabbath? Or ought this event to be deemed tantamount to instituting the first day as one to be for ever kept holy unto the Lord, without a word being said by Christ on the subject? But our Saviour appeared but *once* on this day, and that to two of his disciples only, as they journeyed to Emmaus. On the evening of that day he did appear to the eleven; but according to the Jewish division of time, this was the beginning of the second day of the week. Eight days after this, he appeared again—*i. e.* on the third day of the week—and thus, if our Lord's appearance is to constitute a holy day, or Sabbath, there are at least *three* which have an equal claim to that preeminence.

2. That the disciples were used to meet on the first day of the week:—The resorting to such feeble arguments to support this institution, demonstrates the sandy foundation on

which it stands. There are several religious societies at this time, who meet together on certain fixed days of the week, for the purpose of worship or discipline; and would it not be very unwarrantable for those who may be speculating some thousand years hence on these proceedings, to draw the conclusion, that these days had been kept as Sabbaths?

3. The text in Revelation¹ is quoted in confirmation of a Christian Sabbath: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's-day." This is taken for the first day of the week; but the assumption is gratuitous; for no where in the Bible is the first day of the week called the Lord's-day. In many places we read in scripture concerning "*the day of the Lord,*" yet who believes that there is in these passages, any reference to a particular day of the week? But is not every day the Lord's? And if the first day of the week only is his, to whom do the other six belong? or where is the difference between the day of the Lord, and the Lord's day?

So much on substituting the first day for the seventh, and observing it as a Jewish Sabbath. I shall now proceed to show that neither this day, nor any other day, was kept by the apostles nor primitive Christians, as a holy day, or Sabbath. This appears:

1. From the New Testament giving neither precept nor command so to do.

2. From Paul in Colossians:² "Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat, or in

¹ Revelation i. 10. ² Colossians ii. 16, 17.

drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the *Sabbath-days*, which are a shadow of things to come."

Here it is very manifest that the apostle places the Jewish Sabbath on the same footing with "meats and drinks, and new moons," and which had passed away with the Jewish state and dispensation, and were no longer obligatory upon Christians. He declares it to be a mere *shadow*, which he would not have done had he believed the observance of it to have been "*perpetually binding*." In short, as the Jewish rite of circumcision was a type of the inward and spiritual circumcision of the heart, and as the outward washing and cleansing were types or figures, of the inward or spiritual cleansing of the soul, so was the Sabbath or rest of the outward body, a shadow or type of that inward and spiritual rest and peace realized by the believer, in and through Christ Jesus:—"For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his—let us labour therefore to enter into that rest."¹

3. From the testimony of Justin Martyr. This distinguished Christian and author wrote about the year 150. In a work of his written in defence of Christianity, in the form of a dialogue between himself and Trypho, a learned Jew, the latter offers the following objection; "The Christians, though they boast of the truth of their religion, and wish to excel all other people, differ in nothing from the

¹ Heb. iv. 10, 11.

heathen in their manner of living, because they neither observe the Sabbath nor circumcision."

This language, put into the mouth of the Jew by Justin, proves that the Christians of that time did not observe the Sabbath. If it be said that the objection on the part of the Jew arose from the Christians' keeping the *first day* as a Sabbath, and not the seventh, I answer: the terms of Justin's reply settles this point also—"There is," says he, "another kind of circumcision, and you think highly of that of the flesh. The law will have you keep a *perpetual* Sabbath, and you, when you have spent one day in idleness, think you are religious, not knowing why it was commanded." (Now had the Christians been accustomed to spend the first day in "idleness," there would have been a ridiculous inconsistency in such a reply.) "As therefore," continues he, "circumcision began from Abraham, and *Sabbath* and sacrifice and oblation, from Moses, which, it has been shewn, were ordained on account of your nation's hardness of heart; so, according to the council of the Fathers, they were to end in Jesus Christ the Son of God.—Do you not see that the elements are never idle, nor keep a Sabbath?—Continue as you were created. For if there was no need of circumcision before Abraham, nor of the observance of the Sabbath and festivals and oblations, before Moses, neither now is there likewise, after Christ."

Now is it possible that the Christians could,

in that age, have kept a Sabbath, and Justin not know it? Is it possible that the apostles and Christians before Justin's time could have kept a Sabbath, and the knowledge of it be lost to this learned and enquiring writer within fifty years after the death of the last of the apostles? Every one will answer—No! The testimony of this author, therefore, proves that a Sabbath was not kept by the Christians of his time, neither by those who preceded them.

When and how, then, did the practice of observing a *Sabbath* arise among Christians? I answer, from the following decree of the Roman Emperor Constantine, made in the third century: "Let all judges and town people, and the occupations of all trades, rest on the venerable day of the sun. But let those who are situated in the country, freely, and at full liberty, attend to the business of agriculture; because it often happens that no other day is so fit for sowing-corn and planting vines; lest the critical moment being let slip, men should lose the commodities granted them by the providence of heaven."

Now this decree shows, that the general observance of a Sabbath, or "day of idleness," did not then exist, otherwise there would have been no reason for its enactment—that the exception contained in it with respect to agriculturalists, stamps it with a character very different from the *Jewish Sabbath*—that the institution grew out of a union of

church and state—and lastly, that the choice of the first day of the week, arose from the heathen practice of worshipping the sun on that day;—the newly converted Emperor, thus engrafting a Gentile custom upon the Christian system, from the habitual regard which he had been accustomed to entertain for “the venerable day of the sun.”

With respect to the moral necessity or expediency of setting apart one day in seven, as a day of rest, and to afford an opportunity to worship the God of our lives and our every blessing, this is another and a very distinct question. Not one day in seven only, but every day and hour of our lives, is equally the Lord's; and it is the duty of the Christian to endeavour to keep every day holy unto the Lord; and to meet at stated periods for the purpose of public worship, and present his body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is his reasonable service.

EXTRACTS

FROM

"HORE SABBATICÆ"—¹ OR, AN ATTEMPT TO CORRECT CERTAIN SUPERSTITIOUS AND VULGAR ERRORS RESPECTING THE SABBATH.

By GODFREY HIGGINS.

FROM the following verse in the second chapter of Genesis—"And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that on it he had rested from all his work, which God created and made," many persons have maintained, that the Sabbath was instituted at the creation; and therefore that it is binding on all mankind, and not confined to the Jews. This would seem a fair inference, if the contrary were not expressly declared; and therefore the book of Genesis must be considered to have been written by Moses, writing the account two thousand five hundred years after the event, proleptically.

In the sixteenth chapter of Exodus the Sabbath is first instituted; as it is said in the fourth verse, in order that the Lord might know whether the Israelites would walk in his way or not. And in the fifth verse, it is said, that twice as much manna was sent on the sixth day as on other days. In the twenty-second and twenty-third verses, the rulers come to Moses for an explanation of the reason of the double quantity coming on

the sixth day; and then Moses explains to them that the seventh day is to be a Sabbath, or day of rest.

22 "And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses.

23 And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said,¹ To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake to-day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you, to be kept until the morning.

24 And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade; and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein.

25 And Moses said, Eat that to-day; for to-day is a Sabbath unto the Lord: to-day ye shall not find it in the field.

26 Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none.

27 And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none.

28 And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?

29 See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days: abide ye every man in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.

30 So the people rested on the seventh day."

In several places of the quotation above, a mistranslation has taken place; the definite or emphatic article has been used, instead of

¹ Viz. in ver. 5; but the remainder of this verse is not God's words, as our translators put it; which that following, *as Moses bade*, shows, and the want of these words in what the Lord said. —*Purser*.

the indefinite one. Thus in the twenty-third verse, it is said, *the* rest of *the* holy Sabbath, instead of *a* rest of *a* holy Sabbath. Again in the twenty-sixth verse, it ought to have been said, on the seventh day which is *a* Sabbath, in it, &c. not *the* Sabbath, &c.

In the twenty-ninth verse the emphatic or definite article is correctly used, *the* Sabbath, according to the Hebrew text—the Sabbath being there spoken of as instituted.

If this related merely to the common affairs of life, no one would doubt that the coming of the rulers of the congregation to Moses, showed clearly that they were ignorant of the Sabbath—that they had never heard of such a thing before; for if they had known that it was unlawful to provide food, or gather sticks to light a fire to cook it, or to do any other act of work or labour, how could they have had any doubt what the double quantity was sent for on the day before the Sabbath? And the answer given by Moses in the next verse—“This is that which the Lord hath said”—implies that the information given to them was new. If the practice of keeping the Sabbath had prevailed with the Israelites when in Egypt in their bondage, (a thing very unlikely,) or if it had been known to them that it was their duty to keep it when in their power, the book would simply have told us, that they gathered twice as much on the sixth day, because the next was the Sabbath;—there would have been no coming

together of the elders, or of speech-making by Moses.

In the decalogue, which is ordained in the 20th chapter of Exodus, the Sabbath is first given in all its plenitude; but it is with the remainder of the decalogue expressly limited to the children of Israel: God begins with saying, "I am the Lord *thy* God, which have brought *thee* out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."

The limitation of the Sabbath to the children of Israel, and the making it a sign of the covenant betwixt God and them, expressly negatives the construction put upon the expression in Genesis, that by it the Sabbath was instituted. It is making God act most absurdly, to make him first institute the Sabbath for the whole world, and then give it as a sign limited to the Israelites, when, from its being previously established, it could most clearly be no such thing.

To be a *sign*, was the reason of a Sabbath being instituted — not the resting of God from his work; though the selection of the seventh, instead of the third, or fourth, or other day of the week, was made to remind the Israelites of that event. As we have seen in Exodus, that it was given as a sign of the covenant, so it was understood by Ezekiel, who says:¹

10 "Wherefore I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness.

¹ Ezekiel xx.

11 And I gave them my statutes, and shewed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them.

12 Moreover also, I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them."

The prophet Nehemiah also, expressly declares that the Sabbath was first made known to them, or instituted, from their exod from Egypt. He says:¹

13 "Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments and true laws, good statutes and commandments :

14 And madest known unto them thy holy Sabbath, and commandedst them precepts," &c.

How could it be said that he made known to them the Sabbath there, if it were known to them before? The language of scripture must not be so wrested from its plain obvious signification, to gratify prejudice, or serve particular theories.

The Sabbath was given as a sign of a covenant betwixt God and the Jews, which covenant was expressly abolished by the coming of Jesus Christ; then it necessarily follows, that the sign of the covenant should no longer be observed. If a Sabbath be kept because it was ordained by God previously to the time of Jesus, it must be kept as he ordained it; and how he ordained it, we can only know from the books and the practice of the Jews. They were to do no work on that day, not even to light a fire; no victuals

¹ Nehemiah ix.

could be dressed, or even put on, or taken off the table on that day; the candle was lighted before the day began, and if it went out, it could not be lighted again; and if a draught of water was wanted, it could not be fetched.

In sermons and in books of different kinds, put into the hands of young and ignorant persons, Sabbath-breaking is constantly held up as a most heinous and terrible sin; and when persons thus taught to consider it as a sin of magnitude, equal to the commission of real crimes, are once tempted to a commission of the offence, they become hardened. An effect is produced upon their minds very different from what it would be if they were merely told that Sabbath-breaking was wrong, because it was a breach of a municipal regulation; and that if they persisted in it they should be made to pay the penalty of the law. It is the very acme of impolicy, and has the strongest tendency to corrupt the morals of a people, to teach them that trifling offences—which, from any peculiar circumstance, they are constantly exposed to daily and almost insuperable temptation to commit—are of a heinous nature. The mind, by repeatedly committing a minor offence, coloured to it as an atrocious act, becomes hardened, and prepared by a species of apprenticeship, for the commission of the worst crimes. Hence it is, that we constantly find culprits at the gallows charging the sin of Sabbath-breaking, as they call it, with the origin of their abandoned course of life; and

there can be no doubt that they are correct in so doing. By considering the Sabbath, or day of rest, in the point of view in which it has been placed—merely as a *municipal regulation*—it is evident that the occasional breach of it, will not be attended with the same pernicious consequences as a *divine ordinance*.

If the Sunday be considered as a divinely-appointed substitute for the Jewish Sabbath, the consequence follows, that it must, or at least ought, if consistency be attended to, to be kept in every respect as the Jewish Sabbath was ordained to be kept. In the multifarious and complicated concerns of a great commercial nation, it is not possible to keep it as strictly as ordained by the letter of the old law. Hence it must be violated every day, both by governments and individuals. In consequence of considering this institution of divine appointment, many persons of the best dispositions are placed almost daily in situations the most painful. The distressing nature of these situations, evidently proceeds from the mistaken idea, that it is of *divine*, and not of *human*, appointment. If it be the former, it evidently admits of no modification: but if it be only the latter, it as evidently, may be varied, or even dispensed with, as circumstances may require.

Some have said that it is unwise to lose one seventh part of the labour of the industrious classes of mankind, and that on this account it would conduce greatly to the riches of a state to abolish it. This is the

argument of the West India planter, and no doubt is true. It is the reason why post-masters never wish to have their horses stand still in the stable; and no doubt it is true: but it requires no comment. Others have said, it is a great hardship to deprive a poor man of the produce of the seventh part of his voluntary labour for the support of his family. This is no doubt true also, if the argument be applied to one family only; but if it be applied to a whole nation, nothing can be more untrue. And nothing is more easy than to show, that if in a whole nation the observance of Sunday were to be abolished, though the rich would be greatly benefited, no poor man would be bettered in point of pecuniary concerns to the amount of a single farthing; and in many respects, the comforts and enjoyments of the poor would be very greatly abridged.¹ Some persons have maintained that a day of rest is a day of idleness and dissipation, alike destructive to the purses and the morals of the industrious part of the community. This is to reason against the use, from the abuse of the thing. It only

¹ It is easy to show, that the observation of Sunday, is clear gain for the labouring poor; for, though allowed one day's rest in seven, which is assuredly not too much, the wages of the other six must necessarily be such as to afford them bread for the seventh. But they get no more when they work *every day*; their wages being always ground down to the smallest possible sum which can enable them to subsist; the gain is then exclusively their employer's, while the loss of rest is their's:—yet, it is evident, that the allowance of one day's rest must be general; no labourer can take it if his neighbour do not, for he would starve; a cogent reason for Government to interfere.—*Edinburgh Review*, No. 67, p. 23.

shows the necessity of proper regulations. A person may as well argue against the planting of vines or barley, because people get drunk.

The following injunctions were published by Queen Elizabeth; and as no doubt they speak the opinions of the leading reformers of that day, they are curious and deserving of respect:

“All parsons, vicars, and curates, shall teach and declare unto the people, that they may with a safe and quiet conscience, after their common prayer in time of harvest, labour upon the holy and festival days, and save that thing which God hath sent. And if for any scrupulosity or grudge of conscience they shall abstain from working upon those days, that then they shall grievously offend and displease God.”

When the day is considered as it ought to be, merely as a *human* ordinance, it can be regulated without difficulty by the governors of states, as is most suitable to times and circumstances. But if it be considered as a *divine* command, it is evidently out of their reach or control. However pernicious an effect may arise, they have no means to obviate it, without what ought never to be seen—the government intentionally violating the laws which it tells the people are sacred, and cannot be violated without the commission of a great sin—the governors dispatching

mail-coaches in all directions, and fining poor men for being shaved before they go to church on a Sunday morning.

In the whole of the New Testament, a single passage cannot be discovered, clearly directing the observance of a Sabbath. If this institution be of the importance which some persons attach to it in a religious point of view, it seems very extraordinary that not one of the evangelists should have stated any thing clearly upon the subject—very strange that we do not find the mode described in which it was kept by the first disciples, or the apostles, in plain, clear, and unequivocal language.

From a variety of passages in the gospels, Jesus appears in his actions to have made no distinction betwixt the Sabbath and any other day—doing the same things on the Sabbath that he did on any other day. In reply to this it is said, that what he did on the Sabbath was good and useful—such as healing the sick: this is true; but he did nothing on any other day that was not good and useful; and therefore nothing in favour of the Sabbath can be inferred from this.

One of the most important of all the Jewish rites, and one of the most strictly enforced by the Pharisees, was the observance of the Sabbath; and it appears evident, that Jesus performed various actions for the express purpose of making manifest his disapprobation of the strict observance of this rite, or indeed of its observance at all.

After he had healed the sick man at the pool of Bethesda, he ordered him to remove his bed on the Sabbath-day; and it appears that a very correct and marked distinction was made by the Jews, betwixt healing the man and carrying away the bed — they say,¹

10 “It is the Sabbath-day; it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.”

Afterward, when the Jews charged Jesus with having broken the Sabbath in this instance, his reply was very extraordinary:²

17 “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.”

If the doctrine of Jesus be deduced by implication from his conduct, from this very instance the Sabbath must be held to be abolished. He expressly says to the observation on the subject of the bed,—“I work.” The answer of Jesus clearly applies to the moving the bed, as well as healing the man; because the expression is “these things,” and there were but two acts which could be referred to. But another observation offers itself on this subject: here is the fairest opportunity afforded to Jesus to support the Sabbath, if he had thought proper. If he had thought it right that the Sabbath should have been continued, he would have said to the sick man—Arise, and walk, and remove thy bed when the Sabbath is over.

It has been said, that the instances produced of Sabbath-breaking by Jesus and his disciples, are of so trifling a nature, that

¹ John v. 10. ² John v. 17.

nothing can be implied from them. On the contrary, they were evidently done for the sake of *agitating* the question of the Sabbath; and if something important did not depend upon them, they are much too trifling to have been noticed at all. In each of the cases, they are named evidently for the sake of affording opportunity to record the expression of Jesus to the Pharisees, which came from him in the conversation which followed his act. The removing of the bed was no part of the miracle, and was totally and absolutely unnecessary, and directly in defiance of the old law. The act of pulling the corn, (allowed by Deuteronomy xxiii. 25) was equally an unnecessary act; for if it belonged to his disciples, their residence must have been within a few minutes' walk; and if it did not, it must have been in the centre of a populous country; and if it were further than about one mile (a Sabbath-day's journey) from the place where Jesus rested the preceding night, he must have been guilty of a breach of the Sabbath, of a most remarkable and unequivocal description, in travelling further than allowed by the law on the Sabbath-day.

It has been said, that Jesus by preaching in the synagogue on that day kept the Sabbath. If this argument be good for any thing, it shows that the Saturday, not the Sunday, ought to be kept. But, in fact, this proves nothing with respect either to the Saturday or Sunday: for in preaching on

the Sabbath-day, he only did what he did on every day of the week; and he evidently went into the synagogue because there the Jews were collected together.

In John xx. 26, it is said :

“ And after eight days, again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them.”

Whether the meeting above alluded to, was on the first or second day of the week, it does not seem clear how this—the day after eight days—should be the first, i. e. the eighth day. It may have been the ninth in one case, and the tenth in the other; but in no case can it have been the first or the eighth day. If this passage meant to describe the meeting to have been on the first day of the week, it would have said, on the first day; or, after seven days; or, on the day after the Sabbath. The expression evidently proves that it could not be the first.

The pious Christian will not forget, that the moral law is not entirely dependent either on the law of Moses or of Christ;—though they have confirmed it, yet it was binding on all mankind before Moses or Jesus were either of them born. Although there were no Jews or Christians, can it be supposed that the moral law—the law of right and wrong—was unknown to Abraham and the patriarchs before him? This would indeed be absurd enough.

All the sins against the moral law prohibited in the decalogue, and several others therein not named, are forbidden by Jesus and Paul over and over again. Ther

as a code of law, what loss can the abolition of the decalogue be? Is not the new law which God delivered by Jesus, as binding as that delivered by Moses?

Persons must not entertain the idea, that because the ten laws in the decalogue were intended solely for the Jews, the laws of *morality* were not binding upon others. They were bound by them just as much as if the decalogue had never been promulgated. If the decalogue, *AS A CODE OF LAW*, were binding upon the Gentiles, then were they bound to keep the Sabbath; and surely no one can pretend that that was ever intended, or that a single word in all the Bible can be shown, expressive of disapprobation of the conduct of the Gentiles in not keeping it. Persons reasoning correctly, must remember that the observance of a Sabbath is not a *moral* law, but a rite of discipline.

When the decalogue *as a code of law* was abrogated, the laws of morality reverted to exactly what they were in the time of Abraham; and as such they remain to Christians, unless Jesus added any thing to them; and this we know that he did; for He expressly says—"A new commandment I give unto you,—*LOVE ONE ANOTHER*,"¹

¹ John xiii. 34.

EXTRACTS

FROM

"ESSAYS ON THE PRINCIPLES OF MORALITY,"

By JONATHAN DYMOND.—Essay II. Chap. 1.

SABBATICAL INSTITUTIONS.

"NOT forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is."¹ The divinely authorized institution of Moses respecting a weekly Sabbath, and the practice of the first teachers of christianity, constitute a sufficient recommendation to set apart certain times for the exercise of public worship, even were there no injunctions such as that which is placed at the head of this paragraph. It is, besides, manifestly proper that beings who are dependent upon God for all things, and especially for their hopes of immortality, should devote a portion of their time to the expression of their gratitude, and submission, and reverence. Community of dependence and of hope dictates the propriety of *united* worship; and worship to be united, must be performed at periods previously fixed.

At what interval these periods should recur, whether of seven days, or of five, or of ten, does not appear to be indicated by the light of reason; nor does my examination of scripture furnish any instruction, which appears to me to make a specific interval obligatory upon

¹ Heb. x. 25.

us. From the duty of observing the Hebrew Sabbath, we are sufficiently exempted by the fact, that it was actually not observed by the apostles of Christ. The early Christians met, not on the last day of the week, but on the first. Whatever reason may be assigned as a motive for this rejection of the ancient Sabbath, I think it will tend to discountenance the observance of any day, *as such*: for if that day did not possess perpetual sanctity, what day does possess it? It does not appear that the obligation of observance was *transferred* from one day to another; because no injunction is to be found in the Christian scriptures respecting the observance of any day. The practice of meeting on the first day of the week is *mentioned* in four places¹ in the New Testament; it is *enjoined* in none. It is spoken of as an existing practice, not as a binding duty. The simple fact that the apostles met on this day, however it may recommend it to us, does not make it obligatory, any more than the fact that they washed one another's feet makes that practice obligatory upon us. Upon such a subject, an universal obligation cannot be constituted except by a specific expression of the Divine will. Besides, amongst the Jews, both Christ and his apostles taught on the Jewish Sabbath; and if their practice merely constitutes a binding law, I know not why we should not observe two days instead of one.

¹ John xx. 19, 26; Acts xx. 6, 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2. In Romans xiv. 5, 6, there is a parallel passage.

And with respect to the general tenor of the Christian scriptures as to the sanctity of particular days, it is, I think, manifestly adverse to the opinion that one day is obligatory rather than another. "Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days; which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."¹ Although this "Sabbath-day" was that of the Jews, yet the passage indicates the writer's sentiments, generally, respecting the sanctity of specific days: he classes them with matters which all agree to be unimportant; with meats and drinks, and new moons; and pronounces them to be alike "*shadows*." That strong passage addressed to the Christians of Galatia is of the same import: "How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain." That which, in writing to the Christians of Colosse, the apostle called "*shadows*," he now, in writing to those of Galatia, calls "beggarly elements." The obvious tendency is to discredit the observance of particular periods of time; and if he designed to except the first day of the week, it is not probable that he would have failed to except it.

Nevertheless, the question whether we are obliged to observe the first day of the week,

¹ Col. ii. 16, 17.

because it is the first, is one point ;—whether we ought to devote it to religious exercises, *seeing that it is actually set apart for the purpose*, is another. Bearing in mind, then, that it is right to devote *some* portion of our time to these exercises, and considering that no objection exists to the day which is actually appropriated, the duty seems very obvious—so to employ it. But if for any sufficient reason, (and such reasons, however unlikely to arise, are yet conceivable,) the Christian world should fix upon the second, or third, or fourth day instead of the first, I perceive no grounds upon which the arrangement could be objected to. As there is no sanctity in any day, and no obligation to appropriate one day rather than another, that which is actually fixed upon, is the best and the right one.

Cessation from labour on the first day of the week, is no where enjoined in the Christian scriptures. Upon this subject, the principles on which a person should regulate his conduct appear to be these: he should reflect that the whole of the day is not too large a portion of our time to devote to public worship, to religious recollectedness, and sedateness of mind ; and therefore, that occupations which would interfere with this sedateness and recollectedness, or with public worship, should be forborne. Even if he supposed that the devotion of the whole of the day was not necessary for himself, he should reflect that, since a considerable part of mankind are

obliged, from various causes, to attend to matters unconnected with religion during a *part* of the day, and that one set attends to them during one part, and another during another, the whole of the day is necessary for the community, even though it were not for each individual: and if every individual should attend to his ordinary affairs during that portion of the day which he deemed superabundant, the consequence might soon be, that the day would not be devoted to religion at all.

These views will enable the reader to judge in what manner we should decide questions respecting attention to temporal affairs on particular occasions. The *day* is not sacred, therefore business is not necessarily sinful; the day ought to be devoted to religion, therefore other needless concerns generally are wrong. The remonstrance—"which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath day?" sufficiently indicates that, when reasonable calls are made upon us, we are at liberty to attend to them. Of the reasonableness of these calls every man must endeavour to judge for himself.

EXTRACTS
FROM THE BRITISH CRITIC.

1830. p. 185, 189.

THOSE who maintain the perpetual obligation of the Sabbath, contend, that when God had completed the work of his creation, he blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, and appointed it to be kept as a day of holy rest by Adam and all his posterity ; and they say, that in the command—" *Remember* the Sabbath-day to keep it holy"¹—there is a clear reference to the original institution in Gen. ii. 3. The whole of this argument proceeds on mere gratuitous assumption, and has no support from scripture. That God blessed that day on which he rested from the labour of creation, is certain—He made it, if we may so speak, a festival in heaven, "when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy,"²—but that He appointed every succeeding seventh day to be observed thenceforth by Adam and his descendants, can neither be proved from scripture, nor gathered from it in the way of probable inference ;—for there is not in scripture the faintest hint, that the Sabbath was observed by Adam, or Abel, or Seth, or Enoch, or Noah, or Melchisedec, or Abraham, or any saint or patriarch from the creation to the Exodus. But we are told, it is implied in the Sinaitic precept—

¹ Exod. xx. 8.

² Job. xxxviii. 7.

"Remember the Sabbath-day,"—that an injunction to keep the Sabbath holy, had been already given prior to the delivery of this commandment; and it is quietly taken for granted, that this prior injunction is, in some way or other, comprised in the simple enunciation of the fact, that God having finished the creation in six days, "blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." To this it would be a sufficient answer, that the emphatic word "*Remember*," might be intended only to draw attention more strongly to the fourth commandment, which is acknowledged by the Jews to be the most important of all the precepts of their law.

But, in truth, the injunction to observe the Sabbath was given to the Israelites before the delivery of the law from Sinai. The statute and the ordinance which God made for them in Marah,¹ were—according to the most ancient and universal tradition of the Jews—the two precepts, to keep holy the Sabbath and to honour their parents; in the repetition of the decalogue, which is given by Moses in the book of Deuteronomy,² these two precepts, and these only, are therefore enforced by the additional injunction—"Keep the Sabbath-day, honour thy father and thy mother, *as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee*." The fact that the observance of the Sabbath was appointed to the Israelites before they came

¹ Exodus xv. 25.

² Deuteronomy v. 12, 16.

to Sinai, rests not, however, on any rabbinical tradition, but is plainly asserted by Moses himself; who tells us,¹ that when the people "came unto the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai," the Lord rained down bread for them from heaven, giving them day by day a supply sufficient for their daily sustenance, but on the sixth day a double portion. When the rulers of the congregation reported this remarkable occurrence to Moses, he informed them, that God had given them this double measure, in order to enable them to keep the morrow as a holy Sabbath, as the Lord had enjoined them; and though the manna which fell on other days could not be reserved until the following morning, he bade them lay by a portion of what they gathered on the sixth day, for their sustenance on the seventh; with an assurance, that as no manna would fall on the Sabbath, the portion kept for that day should be sweet and fit for food: and when some of the people—still unbelieving—went out on the seventh day as usual, to gather, "the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days: abide ye every man in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day."²

From this plain narrative it appears, that the Sabbath was given to the Israelites (and

¹ Exodus xvi. 22, 30.

² Exodus xvi. 28, 30.

given to them for the first time, as an institution with which they were wholly unacquainted,) whilst they were encamped in the station between Elim and Sinai; and in the circumstances of the story, we may discover a very sufficient reason why the emphatic word *remember* was prefixed to the fourth commandment of the decalogue.

The Jews, who, in this respect at least, may be admitted to be the best interpreters of their own law, uniformly maintained that the Sabbath, like circumcision, was given exclusively to them, as the sign¹ of the covenant which God had made with them; that it belonged in no sense to the Gentiles; and that it was not lawful even for the proselytes of the gate to observe it. When that covenant of which the Sabbath was a sign, was abrogated, the Sabbath itself was of course abrogated with it. This is confessed: but it is said that the observance of the seventh day Sabbath is transferred in the Christian church to the first day of the week. We ask, by what authority? and are much mistaken, if an examination of all the texts in the New Testament, in which the first day of the week or the Lord's-day is mentioned, does not prove that there is no divine or apostolical precept enjoining its observance, nor any *certain* evidence from scripture, that it was in fact so observed in the time of the apostles.

With respect to the Jewish Sabbath, the conduct of our Lord—who, be it remembered, was born under the law—was very rare

¹ Exodus xxxi. 12, 17.

able. We learn from many passages in the gospels, that "it was his custom" to frequent the public worship of the synagogue on the Sabbath days; but in all other instances, he appears to have treated the scrupulous observance of the Sabbatical laws with studied disrespect. The diseases which he miraculously cured were all chronic; but he encouraged the sick to come to him to be healed on the Sabbath, though they might just as well have waited till the morrow; and if they lay on couches, he commanded them in every instance to carry them away. Thus, too, he justified his disciples in gathering the ears of corn on the Sabbath to satisfy their hunger, though their doing so was unquestionably a breach of the Sabbath: and this he did for two very important reasons; first, to shew that "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath;" and secondly, that He, the Son of Man, as "Lord of the Sabbath," had the same power to abrogate it, as he had at first to command its observance.

It deserves also to be noticed, that though in his sermon on the Mount, and on many other occasions, he enforced and enlarged the other precepts of the decalogue, he never enjoined the observation of the Sabbath on his disciples, nor gave them the slightest intimation that he designed the observation of it—under any modifications—to be continued in his church. Accordingly we shall search the scriptures in vain, either for any apostolical precept appointing the first day of the week

to be observed in the place of the Jewish Sabbath, or for any unequivocal proof that the first Christians so observed it.

There are only three, or at most four, places of scripture in which the first day of the week is mentioned, after our Lord's ascension ; and only one of these from which it can be certainly inferred, that the disciples met on that day for the purposes of public worship. The two first passages are, John xx. 19, and *perhaps* verse 26, which merely tell us, that on the first day of the week the disciples were assembled with closed doors for fear of the Jews. From these texts alone, we could not with any safety conclude that the disciples met together for any religious purposes. The next passage is, "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them." All that St. Luke here tells us plainly is, that on a particular occasion, the Christians of Troas met together on the first day of the week to celebrate the Eucharist, and to hear St. Paul preach. This is the only place in scripture in which the first day of the week is in any way connected with any acts of public worship ; and he who would certainly infer, from this solitary instance, that the first day of every week was consecrated by the apostles to religious purposes, must be far gone in the art of drawing universal conclusions from particular premises. From 1 Corin. xvi. 1, 2, we learn that St. Paul had given orders to

1 Acts xx. 7.

the churches of Galatia and Corinth to make collections for the poor on the first day of the week; and St. John tells us, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day."¹ This is *all* the positive information which the scriptures afford respecting the observance of the first day of the week.

The want of all apostolical precept, either enjoining the observance of the Lord's day in lieu of the Jewish Sabbath, or directing in what manner and for what purposes it ought to be observed, is the more remarkable, when we consider that the great importance which the Mosaic law attached to the times and circumstances of divine worship, made it more necessary for the apostles to notice these points, especially in their addresses to their Jewish converts. But neither in the epistle to the Hebrews, nor in any of the exhortations to the practical duties of Christianity, with which most of his epistles are concluded, has St. Paul once mentioned this subject; neither did the apostles, in their council at Jerusalem, think proper to include the mention of the Lord's day among those things which it was necessary for the Gentiles to observe.

Such is the profound silence of scripture on this head, that, except from the uniform tradition and practice of the Church, we could not certainly have known that the apostles set apart the first day of every week for the purposes of religious worship, in commemo-

¹ Rev. i. 10.



ration of the resurrection of Christ, for the celebration of the Eucharist, and for the relief of the necessities of the poor. These, Justin informs us, were the ends for which Christians assembled on the Lord's day. His account is not only in perfect harmony with scripture, but it supplies the deficiencies of the scripture narrative, and justifies us in inferring, from the scattered notices of this subject in the Acts of the Apostles, and the epistles of St. Paul, that the Lord's day was consecrated by the apostles themselves to these pious and charitable uses.

As there is no divine or apostolical precept enjoining the mode in which the Lord's day ought to be observed, we can follow no better guide than the tradition and usage of the Catholic church. Much, therefore, is left to the authority of every particular church, in defining the circumstances of the public worship on that day; and something is left to the conscience of every private Christian, in deciding in what manner the remainder of the day should be spent after the public worship is ended. The reasonableness of devoting this day to God's service, is so evident, and its conduciveness to our spiritual improvement, is so undeniable, that every good man will use his liberty in this respect with the utmost caution; and, rather than give offence even to his weaker brethren, will carefully conform to the customs of his country, and to the very prejudices of his fellow Christians.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE APPENDIX TO

“ESSAYS ON SOME OF THE DIFFICULTIES IN
THE WRITINGS OF ST. PAUL,” &c.

By R. WHATRELY, D. D.—2d Ed. p. 337.

THE opinion, that Christians are bound to the hallowing of the Lord's-day, in obedience to the fourth commandment, implies that there is a *part*, at least, of the Mosaic law binding on Christians; I should say, the *whole*; for since the fourth commandment is evidently not a moral, but a *positive* precept, (it being a thing in itself indifferent, antecedent to any command, whether the seventh day, or the sixth, or the eighth, be observed,) I cannot conceive how the consequence can be avoided, that “we are debtors to keep the whole Law,” ceremonial as well as moral. The dogma of the “Assembly of Divines at Westminster,”—(in their “confession of faith,” chap. xxi. §. 7.)—that the observance of the Sabbath is part of the moral law,—is to me utterly unintelligible. Yet unless we assent to this, adopting some such sense of the term “moral,” as it is difficult even to imagine, I do not see on what principle we can, consistently, admit the authority of the fourth commandment, and yet claim exemp-

tion from the prohibition of certain meats, and of blood,—the rite of circumcision,—or, indeed, any part of the Levitical law.

Throughout the whole of the Old Testament, we never hear of keeping holy *some one* day in every seven, but *the* seventh day, as the day on which “God rested from all his work.”

Now, surely it is presumptuous to say, that we are at liberty to *alter* a divine command, whose authority we admit to be binding on us, on the ground that it matters not whether this day or that be set apart as a Sabbath, provided we obey the divine injunction to observe *a* Sabbath. One of the recorded offences, we should remember, of “Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin,” was his instituting a feast unto the Lord on the fifteenth day of the tenth month, even “*the day that he had devised of his own heart.*” The Samaritans, who “worshipped they knew not what,” perhaps acted on a similar principle when they built a Temple on Mount Gerizim; though that was not “the place which the Lord had chosen to put his name there:” and so perhaps did Naaman, the Syrian, when he proposed to “wash in the rivers of Damascus, and be clean,” instead of Jordan. One river is as good as another;—one mountain as good as another;—one day as good as another; *except when there is a divine command which specifies one*; and then it is our part not to alter, or to question, a divine command, but

to consider whether it extends to us, and, if it does, to obey it.

I cannot, therefore, but think that the error was less, of those early Christians, who, conceiving the injunction relative to the Sabbath to be binding on them, obeyed it just as it was given, (provided they did not, contrary to the Apostle's injunction,¹ presume to judge their brethren who thought differently,) than of those who, admitting the eternal obligation of the precept, yet presume to alter it on the authority of tradition.

But in the present case there is not even any tradition to the purpose. It is not merely that the Apostles left us no command perpetuating the observance of the Sabbath, and transferring the day from the seventh to the first; such a change certainly would have been authorised by their express injunction, and by nothing short of that; since an express divine command can be abrogated or altered only by the same power, and by the same distinct revelation by which it was delivered. But not only is there no such apostolic *injunction*—than which nothing less would be sufficient—there is not even any *tradition* of their having made such a change; nay, more, it is even abundantly plain that they made *no* such change.

And if we come down to later ages of the church, we not only find no allusion to any such tradition, but we find the contrary distinctly implied, both in the writings of the

¹ Romans xiv. 2—6.


early fathers, and in those of the most eminent of the founders of our Reformation; *e.g.* in Cranmer's Catechism, published in 1548, viz. the first year of Edward VI., we find the following passage:—"And here note, good children, that the Jewes in the Old Testament were commanded to keep the Sabbath day, and they observed it every seventh day, called the Sabbat or Satterday. But we Christian men in the New Testament are not bound to such commandments of Moses' law concerning differences of times, days, and meats, but have liberty and freedom to use other days for our Sabbath dayes, therein to hear the word of God, and keep an holy rest. And, therefore, that this Christian liberty may be kept and maintained, we now keep no more the Sabbath on Saturday as the Jews do; but we observe the Sundays and certain other days, as the magistrates do judge convenient, whom in this thing we ought to obey."

The greater part of what I have said will apply to the opinion of those also, who rest the observance of the Lord's-day, not indeed on the Mosaic law, but on a *supposed* command to Adam, (for none is *recorded*) implied in the declaration that the Lord hallowed the seventh day, because in that, he rested from the work of creation. But to these persons I would suggest, in addition to what has been urged, that it is not said in Genesis, that the Lord hallowed the seventh day at *that time*, but, *for that reason*; and as Moses was

writing for the Israelites, who were charged to keep the Sabbath, it was natural that, when recording the creation in six days, he should advert to the day which *they* observed in commemoration of it.

But if any persons are convinced that it was given to Adam, and also conclude, thence, that it must bind all his posterity, they are of course, at least equally, bound by the (*re-recorded*) precept to Noah relative to abstinence from blood. Any one who admits these obligations, and complies with them *just as they were given*, observing not the first, but the seventh day of the week, as the Sabbath, is acting on a system, which, though it may be erroneous, is at least intelligible and consistent. But he who acknowledges a divine command to extend to himself, ought to have an equally express divine command, to sanction any *alteration* in it.

Those Christians of the present day, however, who admit the obligation of the ancient Sabbath, have yet taken the liberty to change not only the *day*, but also the *mode* of observance. I believe they sometimes allege that the Jews were over scrupulous on this point, and had superadded, by their tradition, burdensome restrictions not authorized by the Mosaic law. This is true; but if we shelter ourselves under this plea,—if we admit the authority of the written law, and reject merely the pharisaical additions to it,—we are then surely bound to comply at least with the express directions which *are* written; for in-



stance, "Ye shall *kindle no fire* throughout your habitations upon the Sabbath day,"¹ no one can pretend is a traditional precept; yet I know of no Christians who profess to observe it.

It is worth observing, by the way, that though the Pharisees certainly had encumbered the observance of the Sabbath with needless restrictions, it is a mistake to suppose (as I believe some do) that in all, or most of the cases in which they took offence at the conduct of Jesus in respect of this point, his design was to reprove them for such over scrupulosity, and to point out in what way the Sabbath ought to be kept according to the institution of Moses. In a few instances this was the case: but in far the greater number, it will be plainly seen, on a careful examination of the accounts given by the Evangelists, that Jesus did decidedly and avowedly violate the Sabbath; on purpose, as it should seem, to assert, in this way, his divine authority. For instance, when He healed the cripple at the pool of Bethesda, He commanded him to "take up his bed and go to his house:" now, the objections of the Pharisees to such an act of charity as healing on the Sabbath day, may be regarded as frivolous; but the man's carrying his bed was a manifest violation of the Sabbath, and could not be called an act of necessity or charity; yet it was *expressly commanded*; on purpose, as it seems, to shew, that the "Son of Man"

¹ Exod. xxxv. 2, 3.

claimed to be the "Lord of the Sabbath;" (that is, to have the divine power of dispensing with God's positive enactments,) of the *justness* of which claim the miracle He had wrought afforded proof.

So also, when his disciples were censured for rubbing out the grains of corn on the Sabbath, his defence of them plainly turns on his *own especial* authority. He alludes to the case of David and his companions, who ate, not without the *permission of the priest*, the shew-bread which it was not lawful for any but the priests to eat: this was, first, tacitly acknowledging that the act of his disciples was in itself as unlawful as the eating of the shew-bread by any but a priest; secondly, it was claiming for himself, at least, equal authority with the priest, who dispensed with the rule in David's favour; thirdly, it was claiming rather *more* authority, because there was *not*, in this case, as in David's, the plea of *urgent necessity*. But then, he proceeds to compare this case with that of "the priests in the temple" who were permitted to profane the Sabbath, by doing the necessary work for the temple service: now, this could not mean that the example of the priests in the temple authorized all men to go about their ordinary business on the Sabbath; but that example did apply to the disciples who were occupied in ministering to *Him, who was Himself the Temple*, in whom "all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt;" and who, on another occasion, to which I conceive he was in this

place alluding, claims for Himself the very title of the "Temple." Lastly, he declares that the "Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath," inasmuch as "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." On this passage, which has often been but indistinctly understood, it may be remarked, first, that it implies an actual violation of the Sabbath; else it would have been needless to plead a supreme *power over* that ordinance; secondly, that it not only cannot imply that any other man had a similar dispensing power, but implies the very reverse; else it would have been nugatory to claim for the "*Son of Man*" (the title by which Jesus distinguished himself) a power which others might equally claim; thirdly, that these are not (as some have represented) two distinct remarks, but stand in the relation of premiss and conclusion; "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath; *therefore* the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath." He evidently means that though he made no pretensions to a dispensing power in respect of *moral* duties, (man being *made for them*) *positive* ordinances on the contrary, being "*made for man*," (i. e. designed as means,—often as local or temporary means—to facilitate man's improvement) might be dispensed with or abrogated by the same authority which established them; viz. by the *divine* authority, which He claimed. The reasoning, at full length, and stated regularly, will stand thus: Any positive ordinance (i. e.

one made for man, and not man for it) may be dispensed with by my (divine) authority: the Sabbath is such an ordinance: therefore the Sabbath may be dispensed with by my authority.

Jesus, however, though he studiously set forth his own dispensing power over the Sabbath, did not, during his ministry on earth, give any general release from the observance, either of that, or of the rest of the Levitical law. This remained in full force, till its types had been fulfilled by himself, — till his kingdom, which he had proclaimed as “at hand,” was come. And when it did come, his apostles were, as I have said, not commissioned by him to change the day, and perpetuate the obligation of the Jewish Sabbath; but they and their successors, even the church which he promised to be with “always even unto the end of the world,” were endued with ample power to enact regulations with a view to Christian edification.

If the positive institutions of the Old Testament are wholly abrogated, THEN (and not otherwise) all days become in themselves indifferent; and in such a case the church has, as I have before remarked, full power to sanctify any that may be thought most fitting: but, on the other hand, the church has *not* power to ordain any thing *contrary* to *God's word*: so that if the precepts relative to the ancient Sabbath are acknowledged to remain in force, *then* the observance of the first day of the week, instead of the seventh, becomes

an unwarrantable presumption. This therefore is a case in which (unless we will consecrate *two* Sabbath-days in each week) we must absolutely make our choice between the law and the gospel.

If I should either refer to the Mosaic law, as the foundation of the duty of observing the Lord's day, or so express myself as to leave my hearers to suppose (as a great proportion of them will, if the contrary be not stated), that I *meant* to refer to that law as binding, I should be guilty of directly, or indirectly fostering error.

Christians need, therefore, to be often reminded that they are required not merely not to "think their own thoughts" on one day in the week, but, as the redeemed of Christ, to "live henceforth not unto themselves, but unto Him that died for them and rose again;" and, "whatsoever they do, to do all to the glory of God." Numerous early Christian Fathers, accordingly, in their commentaries on the decalogue, describe the Jewish Sabbath as corresponding, in the analagous scheme of Christianity, not so much to the Lord's day, as to the whole life of the Christian,—to his abstinence from all works that may draw off his affections from God,—and to his complete dedication of himself to his service.—See Athanasius, Hieronymus, Origen, Chrysostom, Justin Martyr, Clemens Alexandrinus, all of whom hold this language.

It seems to me very important to protest earnestly against admitting a *dangerous pr*

ciple; even though, in some particular instances, the conclusion it leads to may be right, or may be insignificant. If we acknowledge, for instance, the perpetual authority of the precepts respecting the ancient Sabbath, but take the liberty of changing, without any scriptural warrant, the day, or the prescribed mode of observing it, is there not danger that the same principle may be applied to an indefinite number of other cases also? — that this and that scripture rule may come to be modified according to our fancy, till, at length, like the Romish Church, we shall “make the word of God of none effect by our tradition?” For it should be remembered, that neither that Church, nor probably the ancient Jewish, nor any other, *began* by the most *flagrant* encroachments on divine authority. It is in small, and comparatively harmless points, that a false principle begins to be admitted and acted on, till its poison has been received into the system, and gradually advances from the extremities towards the vitals.

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